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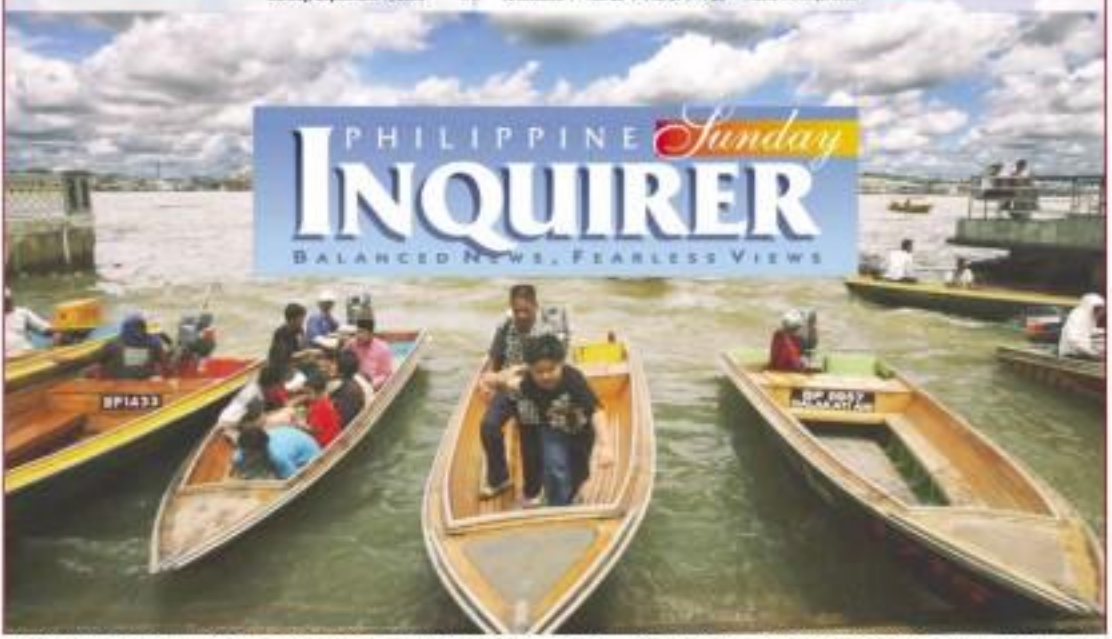
PHILIPPINE Sunday INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS



GOOD NEIGHBOR All of Brunei recently burst forth in glorious celebration of the 62nd birthday of its revered and beloved ruler, Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah. The hospitality which was invited to partake in the festivities was dazzled not only by the people's neighborly traits but also by the sights of delights like water taxis. Rivers remain the main mode of access into the country's interior. CHRIS ISIDORO

Palace: GIs all look alike

'As if they never leave,' says Ermita, 'they come and go'

By Michael Lim Ubac

AMERICAN TROOPS COME AND GO IN THIS COUNTRY. The soldiers all look alike so it's as if they never leave.

It was with such levity that Malacañang dismissed allegations that visiting forces from the United States appeared to have become a permanent fixture in the landscape of Zamboanga City and other crisis-torn parts of Mindanao.

"They are replaced every now and then. They leave, contrary to the citizens' impressions that they have not left," said Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita.

Ermita did not dispute the prolonged US military presence in Mindanao, but disputed statements made by Edgar Aruejo, a political science professor at Western Mindanao State University, that the country had surrendered its sovereignty.

Ermita said this was just the "opinion of one person."

Several press reports said that local officials in Mindanao have complained about the continued stay of the US soldiers after six years and that the US forces have been putting up structures that appear to be permanent.

"Our national sovereignty and territorial integrity are intact," said the re-

PALACE A15

Chavit NSA posting 'better than Gov Palin's'

By Michael Lim Ubac, Edson Tandoc Jr. and Leonelo Ballon Jr.
Inquirer Northern Luzon

WHAT'S WRONG WITH APPOINTING an ally?

Malacañang yesterday threw its support behind newly appointed Deputy National Security Adviser (NSA) Luis "Chavit" Singson.

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said President Macapagal-Arroyo had tapped Singson for the post because of his long experience as governor of Ilocos Sur spanning almost three decades. (For ex-President Estrada's reaction, turn to page A15.)

He even compared Singson to Sarah Palin, the governor of Alaska who was chosen as the vice presidential running mate of Republican presidential candidate John McCain in the United States.

"Imagine, a 44-year-old lady who is governor of Alaska for only two years and yet was thrust into the national scene as a vice presidential candidate?" he said.

"He is an ally, what's wrong with that? An important ally for that matter," said Ermita, commenting on allegations that the Singson appointment was political payback for his having set into motion the events that led to the ouster of his bosom buddy President Joseph Estrada, in 2000.

Singson's damaging exposé about Estrada amassing hundreds of millions of pesos in illegal gambling bribes triggered the impeachment trial that led to Estrada's ouster in 2001 and the accession to the presidency of then Vice President Macapagal-Arroyo.

"The President alone knows the qualities in which she appoints people. She thinks these people can perform in those jobs where they are appointed to," Ermita said.

CHAVIT A11

15,000 toast world's longest beer bar

By Beverly T. Medrideo

IN MANILA THERE IS NO BEER.

That's why last Friday more than 15,000 people flocked to San Miguel Avenue in Mandaluyong City to celebrate the country's famous brew with the annual Oktoberfest and at the same time set two Guinness world records.

Barricaded with a long line of steel chairs, the whole length of San Miguel Avenue, from the intersections of Lourdes to Julia Vargas Streets, was transformed into a 600.5-meter-long beer bar complete with four concert stages.

This beer bar has toppled the Guinness record for the longest bar (220 meters) held by Taiwan.

First mission accomplished. Food and beverage conglomerate San Miguel Corp. (SMC) commenced the celebration. Draft beer started to flow—a full month before October—to kick off the prolonged version of the German festival. While the original German beer fest usually lasts 16 days, SMC has measured a 120-day Oktoberfest.

After the kickoff on Friday, Oktoberfest will be held in different venues in Metro Manila, Cebu and

CLOSE A6

Accidental lawyer finds her true path

By Anna Patricia R. del Castillo

(The author took the bar exams for the second time in September 2007. She wrote this article right after she took her oath last April. But the Inquirer viewed its publication for the bar exams taken during the four Sundays in September (the first one starts today). We are running the article with the 2008 bar examinees in mind and in memory of the lawyer who excitedly found the road less taken. Atty. Del Castillo died on June 23.)

IN THE PHILIPPINES, WHEN YOU SAY you're a lawyer, people react in different ways. You sometimes get respect or deference, sometimes a bit of awe. There are of course those who treat you with suspicion, or even hate. Remember that most popular of all Shakespearean quotations? "The first thing we do, let's kill all the lawyers." (Henry VI, Part II, Act IV)

What's all this about being a lawyer anyway? Is it your entrance ticket into a world of men bound by rules, codes, laws and statutes? In real life, lawyering means entering into a vast network that includes business, entertainment, technology, environment and practically everything else. A lawyer must become that proverbial jack-of-all-trades. Except

ACCIDENTAL A6

PDI grants 22nd wish: Photo-op with Tessa P. Valdes

By Kenneth M. del Rosario

IT WAS A SIMPLE WISH.

But for Marjorie Te, having her picture taken with Inquirer lifestyle columnist Tessa Prieto-Valdes makes for a "fun and interesting" activity.

So when Tessa showed up last week at the Inquirer office in Makati City to pose with Marjorie, who came all the way from Davao for the photo shoot, the latter could not find the words to describe the experience.

Marjorie, 43, was one of 22 Inquirer letter-writers chosen to have

PDI GRANTS A15

Mind Museum: Every exhibit visual, auditory, touchy-feely

By TJ Burgonio

IT'S SHAPED LIKE A FLYING SAUCER and big enough to hold the earth, the universe, four kinds of environment and a T-Rex.

A modern science museum, which promises visitors a multisensory experience, will be built at a cost of P1.165 billion in a sprawling park at Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City.

The Mind Museum, expected to open by 2010, was conceived by the Bonifacio Arts Foundation Inc. (BAFI), whose board of trustees includes Josefina Campos Jr., Fernando Zobel de Ayala and Jaime I. Ayala.

A team of experts in different fields, like national artist Ben "BenCab" Cabrera and other Filipino artists, is collaborating to conceptualize and design the exhibits.

To be built in West Crescent Park in Bonifacio Global City, the museum features the story of the atom, the universe of life, the mystery inside the earth, the majesty of the universe and

MIND A6

• **RICE MEETS** Gadhafi, ending Libyan head's isolation of more than 50 years / A20 • **BHUTTO WIDOWER** set to become Pakistan president / A20
• **Nuns' business** is for, by women in a no-nonsense, Christianized workplace **SUNDAY BIZ**
• **Vicki-Hayden** romance going, going ... • First person account by older woman on her younger man: it gets better • PDI's chief photographer Ernie Sarmiento exhibits key images of a turbulent era **SUNDAY LIFESTYLE**
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Second FRONTPAGE

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GMA's DDR policy OK, says MILF

But secessionist group wants item last on agenda if peace talks resume

COTABATO CITY—THE MORO ISLAMIC LIBERATION FRONT (MILF) yesterday said it was amenable to having the government's "DDR policy" be a guiding principle should another round of peace negotiations be held anew but said that it should be the last item to be taken up in the talks.

The rebel group, which has been fighting for a homeland for Muslims for decades, said it was willing to go back on the negotiating table but there should be no prerequisites of the kind Malacañang had set.

Malacañang has announced it would settle talks with the MILF again if the latter agreed to disarmament, demobilization and rehabilitation (DDR).

The peace talks with the MILF collapsed after the Supreme Court ruled against the memorandum of agreement on ancestral domain that would have allowed the group to carve out a homeland for Muslims in the South, and the subsequent armed incursions of rogue MILF groups in several provinces in Mindanao, provoking a costly civil war by government troops.

"The DDR should be tackled at the last item in the stalled government and MILF peace negotiation, in case it resumes," Ghazali Jaafar, MILF political affairs chief, said.

Jaafar said the MILF central committee had framed up its stand during a recent meeting.

"For the MILF to lay down its arms, by force, as a precondition for the resumption of the talks would be construed as the government using its military might rather than the political approach that most civilized countries use," Jaafar said.

He said the MILF also wanted the word "rehabilitation" in the DDR changed to "reintegration."

In a five-point policy statement called the "MILF Declaration Mindful" that was officially released on Friday, the rebel group described President Macapagal-Arroyo's DDR as "the new government road map to peace" that many countries in the world use in resolving armed conflict with the underground.

Jaafar said the MILF acknowledged that the DDR "forms part of the comprehensive peace settlement." But, he said, it should be the last item, until not in the forefront, of the talks.

"Where the DDR is taken up ahead of the comprehensive peace settlement, it is interpreted to be a military approach. Not in the way of a political approach that President Arroyo promised in 2001 when she explained the all-out war policy of President Joseph Estrada to the all-out peace policy," Jaafar said.

Peace groups alarmed

Renewed hostilities in Mindanao have alarmed peace groups, who said they would lead to a full-blown war.

An official of the International Committee of the Red Cross yesterday admitted that the renewed conflict in Mindanao "has been extremely violent."

"Mindanao has suffered its worst fighting since 2000," Dominik Stillhart, ICRC deputy director for operations, told reporters here.

Stillhart flew in as the ICRC stepped up assistance to displaced civilians. He said the number of the displaced could run up to half a million people.

Deteriorating situation

The National Disaster Coordinating Council reported that the number had exceeded 200,000, individuals from Lanao del Norte, North Cotabato and Maguindanao as throngs sought safety from the resurgence of violence.

"I visited evacuation sites and seeing the deteriorating situation of the IDPs (internally displaced people), we see it fitting to step up our aid," Stillhart said. He visited the village of Libungan Toreta in Pigcawayan, North Cotabato, on Friday.

"We could see in their eyes that these people have been displaced many times over," Stillhart said.

More Red Cross workers

Bai Mehol Alonsar, the local Red Cross official, said the number of people working in the Red Cross relief operations had increased "as more lives remained in the face of the need for greater evacuation assistance."

Perry Oneilberbo, in charge of ICRC relief operations for Central Mindanao, said the number of Red Cross field personnel had also ballooned to about 30 from only five or six before the armed conflict started in July.

"There were so many people that need humanitarian aid and that's one main concern, their health, hygiene and food," he said.

Steen Bangsamoro, a militant Moro group, said the only way to prevent hostilities from spreading is to unseat the present negotiations. Charlie C. Señon, Edwin D. Fernandez and Geoffrey B. Maderse, Inquirer Mindanao

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'Splitting rebels harder to find'

By Cynthia D. Balana

MORO REBELS HAVE CHANGED tack, splitting into smaller groups and making military pursuit operations in Central Mindanao more difficult, Defense Secretary Gilbert Teodoro said yesterday.

This, he said, was the reason the government has doubled the bounty for the capture of Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) Commanders Brown and Kato (from P5 million to P10 million each), and P5 million for Commander Bangalian.

The three are held responsible for attacks on villages in North Cotabato and Lanao del Norte last month that left scores dead and displaced hundreds of thousands of residents.

Speaking on Vice President Noli de Castro's weekly radio program, "Para Sa Iyo, Bayan," Teodoro reiterated the ongoing military operation against the three MILF commanders and their followers had to be carefully planned to avoid affecting civilian communities.

"It makes it more difficult to locate the areas because they are operating in smaller groups," Teodoro said in a Filipino radio.

He said the increased reward was aimed at speeding up their capture.

"It would have been easier if they were in bigger conventional formation so we can target them with bombs. We can't do that now," he said.

The guerrillas, he also noted, often mingled with civilians and used civilians as shields.

Teodoro also said he did not buy the idea the MILF leadership had lost control to watch the actions of the three wanted commanders.

The MILF has refused to surrender them, he said.

Reacting to the increased bounty for the capture of Brown and Kato, MILF chief negotiator Mohagher Iqbal said he doubted it would be successful.

"You know, in the eyes of the people here, Kato and Brown are not criminals. They enjoy popular support. For the people here, they are heroes because they are fighting for the aspirations of the Bangsamoro people," Iqbal told the Inquirer by phone.

AFP needs more money to fight

MAJ. GEN. JOSUE AGUSTO BALVEDEROS yesterday renewed war against the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), says "coming up soon" money measures," and the Armed Forces would have to seek Congress for more money.

"Conducting operations is costly," said Segovia, acting chief of the armed forces of the Philippines command center, at a news forum at Rufo Hotel in Quezon City.

Segovia said the AFP would ask for a big-ger budget from the House committee on defense for the purchase of rocket planes, helicopters, vehicles and communication equipment, among other things.

He could not give figures on the military expenses for operations against the MILF after a peace agreement collapsed in early August.

"What we know is it's using up our resources," said Segovia.

"We are submitting to the legislature a wish list that will give us the capability to confront the situation," he said reporters after the forum.

"We have three basic needs to engage [the enemy]: those, more and communications. Definitely, the wish list would include those needs," he said.

The military operations are focused on capturing three MILF commanders said to be responsible for the attacks—Ameril Umbra Kato, Abdullah Macapaar and Aleem Zulkarnan Pangalian.

The attacks and counteroffensives have left 61 civilians dead and displaced 200,000.

Segovia voiced hopes the operations against the MILF commanders would serve as a long-drawn-out conflict.

"Our objective is to finish this as quickly as possible. Although this is easier said than done because the situation on the ground is dynamic, we're aware that this affects our economy and [causes] pain to our people," he said.

At the height of the government war against Islamic secessionists in the 1970s, unofficial reports said the government was spending up to P1 million a day. El Deogracias

Arab investment key to Mindanao dev't–Nograles

By Norman Bordados

ARAB INVESTMENT IS THE KEY to ensuring peace and development in Mindanao but the constitutional provision against wholly-owned foreign businesses is holding them back, Speaker Prospero Nograles said yesterday.

Nograles said this was one of the reasons he filed a Charter change resolution calling for the removal of the constitutional provision limiting foreign ownership of Philippine-based enterprises to just 40 percent.

"No Muslim would blow up an Arab investment," Nograles said. He said nearly all major managers in the country were built using funds from Middle Eastern and other Islamic countries.

Nograles said investments from wealthy Muslim countries "can safely operate in Mindanao because they enjoy the trust and respect of Filipino Muslims, including the insurgents."

"Mindanao can be surfaced from its present division and ugly situation, where peace is impossible to achieve to the midst of widespread poverty. On the other hand, poverty is impossible to solve without peace.

Nograles, however, said many would-be investors from Islamic states were turned off by the 60-40 equity provision in the Constitution.

Nograles is pushing for Charter change declaration in Congress.

"Our friends from the Arab world and Open [Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries] say, 'why go to Mindanao with our money and technology and you just give us 40 percent and you [Filipinos] keep 60 percent?'" Nograles said.

"This is why I filed a resolution removing the 60-40 provision from the Constitution so that foreign corporations could come in, especially in areas of oil and mineral exploration and other major projects like a Mindanao railway system," he said.

The resolution is pending in the House committee on constitutional amendments, he said.

"Mindanao is trapped in a situation where investments and infrastructure development cannot be put to place because of the volatile peace and order situation," Nograles said.

He said many investors envisaged to put up job-generating businesses in some parts of Mindanao but decided to withdraw due to constant harassment and extortion by armed groups.

"There are some who say that we can't have peace because there is no economic development, and we are poor. Some say investments won't come in because there is no peace. So we really have a problem," Nograles said.

Accidental lawyer finds her true path

Pressagraf

But a lawyer must be master of one thing. He or she must know "the rules" or "the laws" that bind or together as a community, or an organization, or a society.

This is a tough job requiring years of preparation. First, as a law student, when you have to read and comprehend a multitude of laws and cases, and then learn to analyze them. After law school, you must learn to apply them to the real world, the world outside the law school library or the study room.

But first, you must pass the bar exams. The bar is the one test that you must pass to join that elite club of people who append "attorney" to their names. It's a test the republic requires to ensure that an officer of the court we call a "lawyer" or an "attorney" has indeed studied the law for years, and is capable of representing the interest of other people usually referred to as "clients."

Like a doctor, the lawyer holds lives and livelihoods in his hands. You can't let just anyone do this kind of work without first testing him to find out whether or not he really knows what he is doing. Thus we have the bar, a series of gruelling tests taken during the four successive Sundays of September.

A typical bar Sunday consists of a seven-hour exam with a two-hour break for lunch. You are made to answer mostly essay-type questions, although multiple-choice questions may also be included.

One can't take the bar exams without first going to law school. To get into law school, you are required to have finished an undergraduate course; that serves as your pre-law course. Your undergraduate degree must have the prescribed units in the social sciences, languages, philosophy, among others. After that comes the four years in an accredited law school and then the bar diploma. Then you prepare for the bar. There are eligibility requirements include certifications attesting to one's good moral character, and of not having been charged or convicted of any crime.

Armed with the required degrees and other eligibility requirements, you then embark on an unimaginable number of hours of reading and preparing for the test itself. If you are not disciplined in the law, or if you are overwhelmed in it, passing the bar might be one big and difficult hurdle.

That is what happened to me.

I enrolled late with quality and nonchalance. In college, I acted as if it was me the beginning of my own "life" as an adult, or that it would spell out my future. Of course, I knew better even then. But in those days, I was just torn partying, partying and partying.

The only reason I took up law was because both my parents are lawyers. I took up political science in college as a pre-law course. I had a little interest in the law in the beginning, but the path towards fulfilling my dreams through being a lawyer was not clear then.

In hindsight, I see now that to go into law, you need a well-defined, clear-cut desire to do so. You have to want it passionately. Eight years ago there weren't any intensive refresher courses you could research and choose your course from any reputable review center. As I found out, there isn't enough time and there aren't enough resources in the world to help you find that perfect course, after college. I took up law in one of the finest law schools there is, the one where my parents also obtained their law degrees.

A bare crammer

My basic attitude didn't really change that much in law school. I went out a lot hanging out with friends on so-called "gimmicks." Most of the time, I had to force myself to study. I was constantly cramming every time. I also had to put it together, just enough to make it through the "exams" (or those "summative evaluations").

Six months after graduation from law school, I took the bar. Being a basic dramatist, I knew I had to be serious and work like crazy all those six short months. I asked around and the usual schedule was to read at least a hundred pages a day, which meant at least 10 hours of reading and listening to review lectures daily. I did all those, but when the bar rumbled around me, my name wasn't on the list. I was devastated.

People who cram and get by aren't to think that they're smarter than others. I was one of them. When I flunked the bar, I realized I wasn't that smart after all. Working yourself to death for an outside reward's enough. I realized I had wasted eight years of my life.

Flunking the bar made me see that there was no clear path in my life. My future suddenly became hazy and uncertain, and I seemed to be starting anew on an uncharted path. I was denied something by providence. How could I continue studying and take the bar again? Should I just begin a new career path, a whole new life where I would like in charge?

I began to understand the meaning of failure and heartbreak and "dark days" — the rude fact we play in our own lives, and the rule of God in it. God gives us all the freedom we want, but there's also responsibility that goes with it. If I did take the road to a new career path, the older, wiser and tougher me knew I would be faced with many more challenges and possibilities of failure as well. It was a scary thought, but it was also exciting.

Allergic to failure

However, I couldn't resist a second try at the bar exams. First of all, I had all this knowledge and facts swimming around my head from taking the bar exams. Second, I knew that being allowed to take the bar again would be some sort of blessing. I already had the advantage over the others since I would have studied twice, so I would have four or five times more than those taking it for the first time. Third and most important of all, I was "allergic" to failure, and I knew I had to submit myself by passing the second time around. So I took the bar again.

I studied like mad. The rest of the world faded away and there were just me and my books. Officially, I wasn't a examinee anymore since I had studied most of this stuff the first time around. I tried to understand every book I read, and prayed hard that I would remember what I read and studied from the knowledge. Somewhere along the way, I began to find myself.

One day, while studying till the wee hours, I suddenly began to cry. It was self-pity, and the realization that I had never worked so hard in my life. Studying for the bar is the most grueling experience one do because it takes over your whole life and requires all your concentration, energy and patience. It makes you forget any other desires for months, deny yourself all pleasures, hobbies and recreation, and abandon all meaningful relationships. It requires everything that you can give, and more.

When I say I found myself, I mean, it was as if I were around the world, across the universe, and I found myself back home, with myself, with my soul. It was the inner me that could not be defined by the letters or dabbled with or even cliché definitions of the meaning of love that one reads in a Hallmark greeting card on Valentine's Day.

That almost superhuman effort of preparing for the bar exams the second time around made me find my real self. Despite the fact that I had almost no connection with other people for months, this time I found was the me-alone, and also the me in relation to others. A philosopher might call it "the existential me."

'Forever me'

When I found myself, there was no turning back, no reconsiderations for defensive grounds, "no returns, no exchange." I found the "forever me."

D-Day finally came. Since I didn't pass the first time, my confidence was shaken badly, and my emotions precarious. I held it together and answered line and severely, wrote legibly, and prayed as I never or prayed before in my entire life.

After the exams, it was difficult to determine whether I would pass or not. The law is like that — so uncertain, so many possible answers. I waited six long months. Finally, the results were released. My classmates and friends found out before I did. It was exciting how they seemed more certain and more excited than I was.

If passing the first time was like one long congratulatory party, passing the second time was a big sigh of relief. It is exhilarating your confidence, trusting yourself again, and finally, believing that all this was meant to happen. It means getting on the right path again and finding your rhythm and your loved ones still there. It's finding your life again waiting for you.

One with my soul

Everyone says later that it was meant to happen. But do I really believe that? It does mean that I had a lot more to learn before getting to where I am now. All the tension and the confusion of events, all the whys and wherefores of Before Feraf's road less taken would eventually reveal itself in time.

But no. I guess I had to grow up and be true with my soul, that is one mystical rite of passage one thought we only read in great literature, but which is part of everyone's life. What happened in that teenage girl who only thought about what to wear and which party to go to? She realized that life is all about choices. Now it's which book to read, how to schedule her activities for the day (tell the same giggly teenager girl, but now in her 20s, and somehow different in many respects.

At last I discovered that being a lawyer was my true path after all. I thought all that

Brits, Aussies warned on travel to Mindanao

AFTER AUSTRALIA, ITS BRITON'S turn to warn its citizens against traveling to Mindanao because of the clashes between government and Moro Islamic Liberation Front forces.

The United Kingdom Foreign Commonwealth Office, on its website, said, "We advise against all travel to mainland Mindanao and the Sulu archipelago because of ongoing terrorist and insurgent activity."

Similar, Australia advised its nationals against travel to Mindanao due to the "very high threat of terrorist attack." Cynthia D. Rebong

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MILO

15,000 toast world's longest beer bar

From page A1

other major cities.

Alfie Carpio, San Miguel Beer Pale Pilsen brand manager, told the Inquirer that SMC's goal for this year's celebration was to stage the largest and biggest Oktoberfest.

After contacting the Guinness Book of Records and confirming the current records on beer, Carpio said SMC management thought breaking two world records was doable for the grand Sept. 5 celebration.

Kickoff

Aside from having the longest beer line, last Friday's Oktoberfest kickoff hoped to bag the world record for gathering the most number of people for a beer toast.

Las Vegas currently holds the Guinness world record for pooling 13,000 guests to raise a glass of beer.

Carpio said Friday's event had gathered at least 15,000 beer toasters, but a third-party agency has yet to confirm the final count.

Dubbed as "Kinto Beso," the 120-day host bid was deliberately for barkadas (close friends) who get together with a pitcher of beer. This illustrates SMC's tag line "something strong binded (friendship that's one of a kind)," Carpio said.

Largest beer-toasting

"We wanted to communicate that San Miguel is the beer that brings people together. This is the biggest and greatest fiesta ng barkadas. That's a perfect fit as a Filipino," he added.

Friday's big event stopped traffic in the Ortigas business center all the way to Edsa, forcing vehicles to take alternate routes.

Starting at 5 p.m., young packommuters in the Ortigas area as well as music fans started trooping to the designated venue, with many opting to walk to avoid the heavy traffic.

Between 7 p.m. and 8 p.m., the bands started playing to huge crowds. Music wafted through the streets and attracted even more people to the concert party.

SMC president Ramon Ang along with Mandaluyong Mayor Benhur Abalos led the beer toasting at 9:30 p.m. in a ceremonial opening of the Oktoberfest.

Gatecrashers

While everyone was invited to be part of history that night, a good number of young people sat on the sidewalk and listened to the concert outside the venue.

Tickets for the event, featuring the alternative rock band Third Eye Blind and 45 other local bands, were sold at P125 apiece, inclusive of two free Mga Kwentong Pilsen.

Tight security

Quite a few came hoping to be part of the historic beer-toasting, only to find out that they weren't getting to be free.

As the beer poured for the foreign act Third Eye Blind to perform, crowds started to get rowdy, jumping into areas designated for the media and sponsors.

People outside the venue also stormed in force their way in, using banisters to pry open the steel doors that cordoned off the party area.

Carpio said security for the event was tight and protected the safety of the concert attendees.

EXTREME MAKEOVER (OR HANGOVER): On Friday, the stretch of San Miguel Avenue from Lourdes Avenue to Julia Vargas was made over into a bar, the largest, the corporate giant hopes, and with enough people around to toast Oktoberfest to beat the existing record and make it to the Guinness book. —PHILIP C. CASTRO

'Oktoberfest' hangover: 20 workers electrocuted

By Beverly T. Mendrigal

THE OKTOBERFEST BEER PARTY IN ORTIGAS was a soaring success but it doused 20 workers who were accidentally electrocuted while dismantling the barricades and road tents in the concert area.

The Mandaluyong police reported that 20 crew members of Stagetek Co. were injured around 9 a.m., yesterday when they accidentally touched a high-tension wire and soared somehow.

The Stagetek crew have been tasked to take down the tents and barricades erected at the venue of Friday night's San Miguel Oktoberfest kickoff on San Miguel Avenue in Mandaluyong City.

Senior Supt. Carlos de Ungan, Mandaluyong chief of police, said workers were dismantling the roof tents when they accidentally touched the main live wire of Meralco, electrocuting several of the crew.

He said the situation was aggravated by yesterday's sudden rainfall.

Three of the crew, Mamaco Lumyaban, Aman Ambera and Jonathan Irvine suffered serious burns on different parts of the body and were treated at the Medical City.

The rest who suffered minor injuries were Chester Ghabal, Rodel Bautista, Mario Molis, Jeffrey Bello, Benjie Feliciano, Rolando Avella, Elyson Bagamaspad, Jeffrey Zabala, Jonas Ignacio, Raoul Panganiban, Christopher Custodio, Orlando Custodio Jr., Ashley Salinas, Jerish Sandagon, Roderick Vergara, Fidor Grimali, Bantuan tan Dewa.

They were treated at the Medical City and at the Rizal Medical Center in Pasig City.

Mind Museum: Every exhibit visual, auditory, touchy-feely

From page A1

the evolution of technology.

Thus, the museum's main gallery is under the ground (Underground Hall), Life, Earth and Universe. Another gallery devoted entirely to Technology will be on the upper level.

Science in fascinating way

The idea is to teach visitors the principles of science and how they are applied in a hobbyist way.

"Science is not something that you only study in school," The Mind Museum curator Maria Isabel Garcia says in an interview. "We want to emphasize that science happens every day, that you're literally all around making the world that just hearing it to scientists, or leaving it in the classroom) when you're done with school."

Yes, there will be art. However, the gallerist' main draw will be the melange of interactive, multimedia and audiovisual science exhibits, designed by Filipino artists.

"Every exhibit is visual, auditory and tactile," says Garcia, award-winning author of science books and a science columnist for a newspaper. "We want to present science in a fascinating way."

Atom, life galleries

For instance, in the Atom gallery adults has the theme, "The Strange World of the Very Small," the emergence is an interactive exhibit that will tell what happens inside an atom.

"We're consulting with scientists, physicists and chemists to help us understand what happens mathematically inside an atom. [While] also asked] an artist to render it visually in the computer so people aged 6 to 96 will understand and appreciate the importance of the atom," Garcia says.

Visitors are in for a multisensory experience when they walk into the Life gallery, which will feature an incubator-powered exhibit that allows people to experience different temperatures.

"We will give you four different environments in the insects and dioxins—[but will let what] it's like to be in the desert, in the tropics, in temperate and polar regions," Garcia says.

Earth, universe

In the Earth gallery, visitors encounters as close a replica of T. Rex (Tyrannosaurus rex is a huge carnivorous dinosaur), cast from real fossils of the most complete T-Rex ever unearthed. They can also watch films about the Earth's history inside a satellite-inspired theater.

"In 12 minutes, [the film] will give you the history to multiple universe—designed to look like a satellite to give you a sense of time," Garcia says.

The Universe gallery houses a planetarium, where kids can lie down on "memory foams," and view short films about the universe on overhead screens.

Technology

"It's an intimate experience of the universe. We want you to experience the night sky just like when you were kids, lying on the lawn, staring and pointing to the stars," Garcia says.

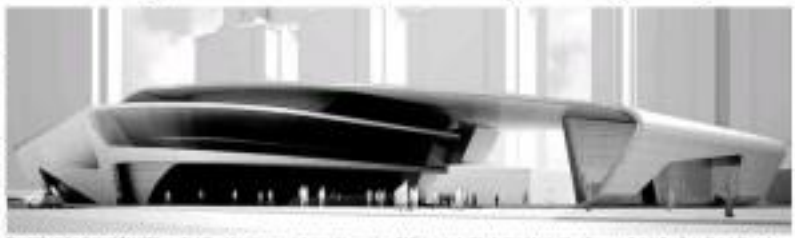
The oval-shaped Technology gallery is located on the second level to show that technology is bundled on the elements.

Here, visitors can check out the wide array of wearable instruments and will have an open view of the galleries on the ground floor. Hopefully, they would understand how the two levels are interrelated.

The Technology gallery the largest of the five, is further divided into different exhibitions "according to how we value things," says Garcia.

"If you want to learn how a digital camera works and how it's different from the old cameras, there's an interactive exhibit that will explain the technology then and now," she says.

Another exhibit features Filipino expressions in art, literature and communication.



SHAPED LIKE A FLYING SAUCER, the Pi-billion Mind Museum is designed by architect Ed Calma, and will be built inside the West Evocomm Park in Bonifacio Global City. It is expected to open in 2010 and promises a one-of-a-kind multisensory experience.

ONE OF THE MAIN GALLERIES will feature a 13-minute film history of the Earth inside a mobile-inspired theater.

Board of trustees

The Bell's board of trustees also includes Anna Margarita Dy, Mariano John Tan Jr., Edgardo Cruz Jr., Albert Zosa, Carlos Rollloa and Vicky Garchitorena.

The board coordinated Garcia and Winny Hui to draw up the concept for the science museum. The joint chew forward an advisory council with Rev. Edb. McCain Wadd Group Asia Pacific chair emeritus Dolly Alonzo, St. Luke's Medical Center medical director and set person Dr. Joven Cuanang, physician Dr. Jaime Licauco and Dr. Cesar Saloma, cognitive psychologist Dr. Mary Liwag and Dr. Joey Salceda of the National Institute of Math to counterpoint to the exhibits.

The group engaged many from the University of the Philippines and University of Santo Tomas to collaborate on the design of the science exhibits, and later signed up Ark House Associates and Science Center Singapore as consultants.

Eco-friendly marvel

The Bell, which is funded partly by contributions of property owners in the Bonifacio Global City in providing the seed money and raising additional funds for the project.

A initial group of companies, namely Ayala Corp. Philippine Corp., Ayala Land Inc., Bank of the Philippine Islands, Del Monte Philippines, Globe Telecom, IMI Group of Companies, Nutrimix Inc., Manila Water Corp. and R.A. Rufino and Partners, has committed P150 million for the project.

The museum, which occupies half of the 12,500-square meter West Crescent Park, is an architectural marvel with eco-friendly features.

It will use a light-colored exterior for solar reflectivity and a sweeping curved roof to ensure rainwater flow into a drainage. It will have a large glazed opening for natural wind ventilation and a ribbed face for minimal heat reflection.

"Everyone would think that it's a flying saucer, but when you analyze it, it responds to the forces in the environment: Wind, sun and rain," says architect Ed Calma, who designed the building.

Marina allows Sulpicio ship in accident to sail

By David Icreal Sinay
Inquirer Visayas

ILOILO CITY—THE MARITIME INDUSTRY Authority (Marina) has allowed the MV Catalunan Pequeno to sail after concluding it was seaworthy despite having rammed the Iloilo port on Thursday.

But Eduardo Lotero, owner of the vessel, will be asked to pay for repair of the port, which could run to P30 million, according to Philippine Port Authority Iloilo manager Fesarino Salera.

The Catalunan Pequeno hit the pier, which is currently undergoing expansion and renovation, as it maneuvered to dock.

Salera said International Catholic Corp., the consortium in the P486-million port expansion project, informed him that 12 of the pier's 36 bored piles were destroyed while the rest others were damaged.

The contractor pegged the damage at P16 million, Salera said.

The port construction work was about 80 percent complete before the incident happened, Salera said.

Only scratches and dents

Romulo Sumagpao, Marina shipbuilding specialist II, said that, on the other hand, the damage to the Catalunan Pequeno was "negligible," with only scratches and dents on its side.

Sumagpao said the ship was pushed into the bored piles by the "strong water current."

Initial assessment showed no damage to the ship's hull but it would be best to have the ship undergo a thorough underwater inspection by an accredited surveyor, Sumagpao said.

He said Sulpicio Lines had been advised to ensure the Catalunan Pequeno undergoes a comprehensive underwater inspection by a Marina-accredited surveyor in Manila.

He said the 4-year ship was carrying a cargo of fruit, vegetables and fish.

Sulpicio Lines' cargo ships were allowed to sail again only recently after the company's flagship passenger vessel, the MV Princess of the Stars, sank off Sibuyan Island in Romblon on June 21 during Typhoon "Frank," leaving over 700 passengers dead and missing.

Go-signal from Marina

The Catalunan Pequeno, which had sailed from Zamboanga, arrived at the Iloilo port at around 1 p.m. on Thursday. It was supposed to leave for Manila at 2 p.m. but because of the incident, the Philippine Coast Guard prevented its departure until Marina gave the go-signal, said Jimmi Arnaiz of SLI Iloilo in a phone interview yesterday.

The investors tried to reach SLI Iloilo manager Ken Pancho and the ship master, Capt. Virgilio Bagnes, but they were out of the office, according to Arnaiz.

She said she was not aware of the details of the incident or when would the ship would sail for Manila.

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Automated polls to cost ₱31B—report

By Kristine L. Alave

THE GOVERNMENT MUST SPEND P31 billion if it wants to use the Direct Recording Electronic (DRE) equipment nation-wide in the 2010 elections and P11 billion if it chooses to deploy a combination of the DRE and Optical Mark Reader (OMR) machines, according to the Commission on Elections Advisory Council.

The council, in its budget report to the commission, said the Comelec would need 200,000 units of the DRE for the 50 million voters registered across the country.

Including the cost of machines needed for the polling and canvassing centers, as well as project management and systems management costs, the total bill is expected to reach P31.20 billion, according to the report obtained by the Inquirer.

Using the OMR would be significantly cheaper, the report said. According to the council's calculations, the Comelec would need 2,500 OMR machines for every 10,000 registered voters. Each unit costs P700,000.

Ballots, at P10 per voter, would cost P500 million. Including the costs of transmission and canvassing systems, and project management and systems integration expenses, the Comelec needs to disburse P1.46 billion for the OMR in 2010.

Conservative estimates

If the Comelec opts to use both systems in the 2010 elections—OMR in the provinces and DRE in urban centers like Manila, Cebu City and Davao City—it would have to allocate P11.56 billion, the report said.

There are about 7.59 million registered voters in the three major urban centers.

Howard Calleja, a member of the advisory council and legal counsel of the Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting, said the figures that were submitted were "conservative estimates" based on the outcome of the automated election conducted in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.

It did not include the amount needed for the replacement of voters using biometric technology he said.

The cost might be steep, but the machines would become the property of the Comelec, Calleja said. The technologies could be used for three elections, he said. "So ordinarily it's cheaper than leasing them."

Calleja said the findings of the council should give legislators an idea of how much money using the 2010 exam modernization would cost the government. He said they should remark the necessary funds in the 2009 budget, which is currently under deliberation.

Should be included in 2009 budget

"We have to produce this in the 2009 budget in order that we can have a holding. Before we could bid it, it must have a [NEP] [special appropriations release order], which means it has to be programmed in the budget," he said.

If Congress fails to include the funds for the 2010 elections in the 2009 budget, Calleja said, there might be a chance that the country would not be able to hold its first automated computerized election.

Comelec Chair Jose Melo had said that using the DRE in all voting centers, which would present fewer opportunities for human intervention than using the OMR, would be too expensive.

"It is four to five times more expensive than OMR. If we use DRE in all precincts in 2010, we won't be able to afford it," Melo said.

He said the most feasible approach would be to deploy a combination of DRE and OMR technologies.

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NFA seeks extension of cheap rice sale

By Amy R. Remo

THE NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY (NFA) the Department of Social Welfare and Development should extend the selling of state-subsidized rice in retail and public markets up to Sept. 30.

The extension would benefit families that had not yet received their family access cards (FACs), said Ben Evangelista, NFA director for public affairs.

The DSWD began distributing this year family access cards to Metro Manila families identified as the "poorest of the poor."

The FAC would allow the families to avail of rice sold at the state-subsidized price of P18.25 a kilo, now being sold exclusively in Visayan Sinsin Centers is identified PhCentralStations.

Restricting the sale of government rice to PhCheckers began on Sept. 1.

Maximum benefit

Extending the sale period to the end of September would ensure low-income groups and the underprivileged of maximum benefits from the government's rice subsidy and other hunger-combatting programs, the NFA said.

This would also enable the NFA to focus distribution efforts of affordable rice to families which really need assistance from the government.

As many as 336,608 families, or about 2.14 million individuals, are expected to benefit from the program that restricts the sale of government rice to the needy.

Alcuaresma said, however, that of the current 150,000 "poorest of the poor" families identified by government, only a fraction, or around 15,000 families, have been given the access cards.

List of beneficiaries

"In certain parts of Quezon City, Caloocan and Manila, for example, some families have not been given their family access cards yet," he said.

He said the extension will give local government units and the DSWD time to iron out the final list of beneficiaries and hand out the cards to families.

In the provinces, the sale of NFA rice in Tindahan Natin outlets will continue using the DSWD's rice allocation ledger until December, he said.

Tindahan Natin operators will be required to produce a rice allocation ledger before buying government rice, he said.

The NFA said it will strictly pursue the policy of "no rice allocation ledger, no rice allocation" to the Tindahan Natin outlets.

The NFA will continue selling well-milled rice to accredited income consumers at P25 and P35 a kilo, to bring down the cost of commodities.

From July until the end of the year, the NFA will flood the market with at least 20 million 50-kg bags, equivalent to 1.0 million metric tons of rice.

With the 1970s "selective foodsufficiency" strategy, the country has seen a drop in prices of the main staple, particularly during the traditional lean months of July to September when retail prices are supposed to rise.

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'Tatak Bulakenyo' further unveils Bulacan's rich heritage

By Mariole Vergara

A WEEK-LONG NOSTED OF FESTIVITIES do not make a fiesta more exciting. But in Bulacan, that's an altogether different story. Standing proud at the center of many historic events that helped shape a province's history, Bulacan needs no further proof to show the kind of stuff the province and its people are made of.

As the savanna province situated north of Manila, Bulacan is known to be the cradle of heroes like Marcelo and Gregorio del Pilar, poets like Francisco Balagtas, the first-ever Bulakeño Artist for this year's Bonifacio Perras, Virgilio S. Almario, the father of modern poetry, musical greats Antonio Buenaventura, and other illustrious artists

Simeon Hizkuelo, Jose Joya, Malang, incomparable Benjamin Alang Ocla Banta, and outstanding entrepreneurs as well. Suffice it to say that it is a splendid cultural gateway to other aspects that marks the province with distinction.

The entertaining program of the province "Tatak Bulakenyo" celebrates the culture, history, traditions, wealth, achievements, excellent products and technology and it woven through the matched programs and activities with in Bulacan's Singkaban Fiesta slated for an entire week and begins on Sept. 8. This year's festivities cover a wider calendar of arts, cultural, trade related activities to help promote the trade and economic projects of the province, alongside its aim to bring many more Bulacan-made products to a much wider market. Further, "Tatak Bulakenyo" aims to instill and deepen the people's appreciation of Bulacan's products which is made by the very hands that display the Bulakenyos's expertise skill and artistry, and have thus contributed to the steady growth of the province, despite recent setbacks and challenges.

At the epitome of all, that is considered a source of pride by the province—its products, resources, industry people, Gov. Jonjon Mendoza affirms that there is every reason for the people to be proud of their rich heritage, "Bulacan is popular for its many peculiar, exceptionals, unique, exquisite and other delicacies, and is home to other crafts, like our beautifully created colorful pasalbo wrapped! When translated to tangible terms, I define "Tatak Bulakenyo" as our big agricultural and industrial arena, bursting of a diverse array of unique and distinctive food line, excellently designed and crafted jewelry, garments, gifts, toys and leathergoods, gynoecious products, state-of-the-art technology even as it continues to preserve the precious legacy and values handed down by our forefathers."

Gov. Mendoza adds, "Tatak Bulakenyo" is elevated to a higher plane to showcase the core values of an empowered Bagong Bulakenyo' where positive character traits are put to the fore and yield such favorable outcomes in every conduct of life, be it at work, in school, or in the home of a Bulakeño. In fact, the Singkaban Fiesta is anchored with the theme: "Sipag, Husay at Talino ng Bagong Bulakenyo".

Bearing progressive Bulacan which has proven time and time again to be one of the strongest local economies in the country is also crowing with national recorded and breathtaking sights, attractive tourist destinations, historical landmarks, recreational spots, world-class resorts, cows, natural pools, springs and beaches. The Hiyas ng Bulacan museum is filled with memorabilia of the province's great men and women in history.

Singkaban Festival: Window to Bulacan's rich past and abundant future

Take it from a Bulakeño to add color and glaze to an otherwise rustic word Singkaban which refers to a famous bamboo arc decoration usually put up during town fiestas, and transform it to a symbol of greater significance.

Today Singkaban stands for: "Strong at Kulturangyo ng Bulakeno."

Singkaban exudes the best, the unique, and still that is excellent in Bulacan through a week-long tapestry of activities which include chorale singing, band playing, theatrical plays, street dances, art and food exhibit, parade, competition of talents and skills and unique ("Teak Bulakenyo") products from all over the province. The visitor is sure to get more than just a flavorful sampling of how the resourceful, better known as "bagong Bulakenyo", celebrate life and progress through Singkaban.

Whether historically culturally, politically or in the artistic realm, Bulacan has so much to be proud of because the province is teeming with remarkable luminaries, heroes, artists, craftsmen, statesmen, singers, performers, educators and outstanding icons, past and present.

For this year, the highlight of the celebration will be a showcase of the longest Pasalias, the culmination of a 20-day preparation by the province for its bid to the Guinness Book of Records under the category of amazing feats. Balitaw is popular among amateur kin on distinctively sweet candy products and lip-smacking delicacies like the Pasalias. The 200 meter-long Pasalias which is 2 inches in diameter and weighs more than 3,500 kilos is equivalent to 87,500 pieces of the regular-sized pasalias! This confidence spree is but part of Governor Jonjon Mendoza's aggressive efforts to promote a variety of "Teak Bulakenyo" goodies (which as of today are over 3,000!) in the global marketplace.

While the Singkaban Fiesta depicts the flourishing cultural and historical heritage of Bulacan under the very capable leadership of its Governor Jonjon Mendoza, "Singkaban is but a statement of our serious advocacy towards self-reliance, and an empowered citizen amid a thriving business environment but with the distinct Bulakenyo touch! After all, there is so much more to Bulacan than the usual fare," he begins. "This year's theme puts to the fore our very own 'bagong Bulakenyo': 'Upag, Husay at Talino, Tatak ng Bagong Bulakenyo!' because I believe that our very best some — more than our natural resources and even our industry, — is our very people. Harnessing the talents, the potential to be something to each, especially the youth is what I have been doing since I assumed leadership."

Unknown to many, Gov. Mendoza is a maverick, hands-on, very focused public servant that has given new meaning to the word "service" and "commitment" through numerous programs on health, entrepreneurship, environment and other humanitarian projects which sought to uplift and improve the lives of the Bulakenyos. His perfected and sincere implementation of the 'Kapitan sa Barangay' program makes him, so far, the only public servant personally involved to the day-to-day concerns of his constituents down to the barangay level.

"I saw the need to help build a strong community. And how else can that be achieved if relying on mere experts? I need to know what they think, need, or feel or lack or dislike. Walking one's talk only becomes believable to your constituents if they see you practice what you preach. People willingly follow rules, administrative orders from the government because they understand and know that the purpose is for their greater good — not for self-interest. I believe that is how I am then able to gain the trust and cooperation of my constituents because they know that their role, no matter how small, contributes to the success of those programs which has benefited Bulacan. The people and provinces become more resilient, stronger, more progressive despite onslaughts of catastrophes."

Gov. Mendoza, whose advocacy is anchored on character-building, strongly espouses core values to be instilled among the children, the youth and the adults alike, undertones love of God, love of family, concern for others, honesty, loyalty, discipline, creativity and intelligence, responsibility, compassion, hard work, dependability... which are basically the traits that characterize "ang bagong Bulakenyo. His ripple is truly very encouraging. It is never too late nor impossible to change a defeatist mindset. Besides, I am always challenged by the word impossible. All things are possible, with dedication, hard work, honesty, and sincerity, a turnaround is always possible even in the worst of scenarios. Bulacan has proven it to be so, that's why beyond the festive mood, we are celebrating, having overcome several of crisis after crisis by drawing from God's providence, our very own strength — our people, riding high on 'bagong Bulakenyo'. That's why the theme for this year revolves around everything that is essentially 'Bulakenyo'. "

Stay tuned as Singkaban and experience an unforgettable, fiesta-steeped in sweet history — as only Bulacan can offer.

With so much hope and expectation, we forge ahead, because the best is yet to come!

Bulacan sa Singkaban!!!

Singkaban Fiesta depicts the flourishing cultural and historical heritage of Bulacan under the very capable leadership of its Governor Jonjon Mendoza, 'Singkaban is but a statement of our serious advocacy towards self-reliance, and an empowered citizen amid a thriving business environment but with the distinct Bulakenyo touch'

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OPINION

Dirty, rotten 'trapos'

EDITORIAL

AS-SO-CALLED CONSORTIUM ON ELECTORAL REforms (CER) composed of lawmakers from the two chambers of Congress is railroading the passage of what it dubs an electoral reform law that is really nothing but a perpetuation of the worst features of traditional politics or "trapo" (dirty-rotty politics in Tagalog slang).

Without anyone really knowing it, the CER had already held a series of workshop conferences in which the major political parties, party-list groups, members of the academe and so-called civil society reviewed House Bill 3655, "An Act Strengthening the Political Party System" and proposed changes thereto. Last Aug. 30 the bill was passed on third reading, but due to protests against its having been railroaded, it was sent back two days later by the House majority to "further plenary deliberations."

The railroading was only too obvious. By the time the bill was up for third reading, its title had become "An Act Strengthening the Political Party System, Appropriating Funds Therefor and Other Purposes." The second clause shows that the proposed law is nothing but a way of channeling more funds [what the bill calls "state subsidy"] to political parties. In short, the bill seeks to future *trapo* parties with pork barrel in time for the 2010 elections. Senate version of the bill similarly assumes the state subsidy to political parties.

Principally authored by Rep. Juan Edgardo Angara, HB 3655 is long on rhetoric, short on transparency. Ironically it purports to promote transparency. According to the CER workshop, the bill aims "to institutionalize reforms in the financing of electoral campaigns, thereby promoting accountability and transparency." It further seeks to penalize political turncoatism, adjust authorized electoral expenses to current consumer price indices, and define criminal liabilities for the non-submission, non-disclosure, false reporting of financial statements, as well as overspending beyond allowable limits.

What is laughable about the bill is that while it ostensibly tries to check electoral overspending and foster transparency in party financing, it seeks to do so by subsidizing the political party system. As things stand now, political parties are not exactly candid or forthright about their financing and spending.

But let there be no question about it. The Philippines has no law governing political parties other than the Omnibus Election Code, and there are no laws regulating political finance outside the campaign period. There are no limits on spending or contributions, no required declarations of assets and liabilities, no reporting requirements, and no disclosure of financial records to the public or a governmental body. Electoral reform groups have called for a law to regulate party practices and finances between elections.

But even the Comelec has not done well in regulating finances and expenses during campaigns. And it appears none has been penalized for overspending or misdemeanors. A recent report said that several senators had overspent in the last elections. What has the Comelec done about it? Done to disqualify, what has the Comelec done to check electioneering and premature campaigning?

In the meantime, a bill seeks to check party finances and expenses between elections by providing state subsidy to political parties in order to—again check the rhetoric—"professionalize parties and make them viable and accountable partners in development and good governance." The subsidy is tantalizingly called a "political party development fund," which echoes the euphemism about the standard pork barrel of congressmen and senators—"countrywide development fund" and "priority assistance development fund." The connection is all too readily evident.

It seems that for all their good intentions, our lawmakers can't help but show their true colors. In seeking to reform the political party system, they end up perpetuating its worst features, especially the unseemly side in which politics and public service become talents in self-enrichment and entrenchment.

It can't be otherwise, perhaps. Congress is filled with political families that have been fattened through the decades, so it wouldn't be expected to pass an enabling law to realize the constitutional proviso against political dynasties. Now it is trying to pass a law to enable parties to exert more influence from government. Our dirty-rotten trapos are relentless. The way they are railroading HB 3655 and its Senate version, we are yet witnessing what's literally a rags to riches story.

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GMA's delayed indignation over the MOA

SEPARATE OPINION

Joaquin A. Cruz

WHEN THE FULL TEXT OF THE MOA BETween the Republic of the Philippines and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front was published last Aug. 4, waves of indignation swept the whole nation against the craven surrender of our sovereignty to the arrogant demands of the rebels.

Strangely, however, President Macapagal-Arroyo said nary a word. Henrygumen Esperon Jr. of the Philippine peace panel exuberantly said that "all systems go" for the signing of the MOA at the next day, but DND still kept silent. It was left to the Supreme Court and not our commander in chief to restrain the confusion of that abominable agreement in favor of the Bangsamoro as the "first nation" in this country where all persons are entitled to the equal protection of the laws.

Esperon was acting in representation of the President, who had given him the authority to negotiate with the MILF for the approval of an honorable peace settlement. If GMA felt her delegate had spoken out of turn or in excess of the powers entrusted to him, she should have said so and promptly dismissed him and his colleagues in the RP panel. Despite the revulsion of the whole nation to what they had done to the humiliation of our country before the rest of the world, GMA did not protest.

Her failing to do so, she gave truth to the adage that silence means consent.

Last week, the government was singing a different tune. Through Solicitor General Agnes Devanadera, it clothed the unacceptable MOA and declared that it would not be signed by our delegates "in its present version or in any other form." President Arroyo herself boldly said, rather belatedly, that she would not sign the MOA "even at gunpoint." She was being courageous at last when the whole nation had been expressing her to react speedily against the affront to the honor and dignity of the Republic she is supposed to head.

What took her so long to lead the nation in redressing its honor by denouncing the MOA as the dire threat it was against the sovereignty of the Philippines and the integrity of our national territory? The MILF wanted to dismember it or form a separate state subject to its own laws under a government of its own choice without allegiance to the flag of the Philippines.

I suppose that being a practical politician as well as an international figure of some if not impressive repute, she had to reflect carefully on the position she should take on the delicate question before her. With the attitude of the Filipino people foremost in her mind, she also had to consider the reaction to her decision of foreign countries like, for instance, Malaysia that brokered the peace talks and, of course, our Big Brother Brother in US.

Openly supporting the MOA might enthrall GRP to the United States which had instructed its ambassador to this country to attend the scheduled but subsequently canceled signing of the MOA on Aug. 5. But it would further deteriorate her relationship with her own people who had disowned this agreement for insulting the dignity of the country she professes to love.

On the other hand, rejecting the MOA would displease the latest dark administration in Washington that might be supporting the agreement for its own private motives disguised for the avowed purpose of fighting terrorists everywhere in the world. However, such a stand would re-invest La Gloria in the eyes of her most disappointed people as a heroine dedicated to the cause of freedom and independence who should be allowed, as a just reward, to remain in Malacañang beyond 2010.

The only flaw in these suppositions is that the acceptability of whichever position she might take would have to depend on her ease credibility as tested—and found wanting—on many occasions in the course of her political career. The most memorable evidence of her unbelievability is the commitment she made in 2004 that she would not run in the 2004 poll, decided she lied when she unexpectedly won in the shadow of the Garci tapes.

The unconfirmable fact is that any position she might take now on any question is not likely to be believed because of her many past misadventures with the truth. She is like the boy who was slain by his own lies for shouting "Wolf!" too often.

At any rate, it is fortunate that in the end she agreed to side with the Filipino people in protecting our honor and self-respect as a free-from-loving member of the family of nations. We are dedicated to the ideal of international peace but are prepared to defend it at all costs any attempt to diminish our territory or undermine our sovereignty.

Finally, it suffices to note that the possibility of the Philippines being cited for disregard of the MOA is an ignorant fear. A state may be sued only with its consent before the International Court of Justice under the "optional jurisdiction" clause in Art. 36 of its Statute. A municipal court in the Philippines has more compulsory jurisdiction under our own laws than the highest tribunal in the world with its diplomatic inhibitions.

Within, between and among us

MOMENTS

Fr. Jerry M. Orbos, SVD

Have you shared your faith to others?
Have you made other people feel and experience God's love?
Or have you been too focused on yourself and too selfish of your God?

THE STORY IS TOLD ABOUT A MAN WHO was elated with a satellite dish he bought for only P600. The dish, when connected to his television set, would give him access to unlimited satellite-fed programs. There was one hitch though: he had to direct the dish toward the exact location of the satellite, and for that, he needed to buy a telescope that cost about P50,000.

* * *

In today's Gospel (Mt. 18, 15-20), the Lord tells us to direct our attention to fraternal correction, a difficult but an important aspect of our Christian life. We cannot just overlook or deny the reality and the need to correct mistakes and mend broken relationships. Are there people you need to correct? Are there truths you need to point out? The truth hurts, and the process of pointing out the truth is painful, but the truth does set us free.

* * *

How far easier to mind one's own business. How far simpler indeed to just let things be. However, we all have a prophetic calling to speak up and stand up for truth and goodness, not out of self-righteousness or pride, but out of love and obedience to God who is the Way, the Truth and the Life.

* * *

Christianity is not just about me and my God, but about me, my neighbor and our God. Indeed, the Kingdom of God is not just within us but between us, and among us. Going to heaven is not some exalted wherein the holiest among us will get the first places. Rather it is the joyous gathering of friends and friends, and the helping of each other so that we all will get there somehow.

* * *

Have you brought anybody closer to God? Have you shared your faith to others? Have you made other people feel and experience God's love? Or have you been too focused on yourself, and too selfish of your God? Our God is a God who wishes that His love be made known to all through you, and even in spite of you. What have you done about this, and what are you doing the rest of your life about it?

* * *

We all know that prayer is powerful, but what we need to know more is the power of community prayer. The Lord reminds us today: "If two of you agree on earth about anything for which they are to pray, it shall be granted to them by my heavenly Father." Why is it that most meals change on our country today? Perhaps it's because we are not praying enough, and we are not praying much as a people and as a country.

* * *

I have been using Manoc in different parishes in Los Angeles for a week now, as line to connect my previous work with the Healing Eucharist TV Mass (TFC), and as part of my task at the OVI Mission Office. It is relating and recharging to be with Filipino communities that are eager to hear God's word. It is really an edifying experience to feel the Lord's presence in one midst in a foreign land. I always end my homily with the words: "Remember, wherever you are, you are there and God is there!"

* * *

Sept. 8 is Mama Mary's birthday. As sons and daughters of the Blessed Mother, let us always do what is pleasing to the Father, what is beneficial to others and what elevates us as sinners. May Mama Mary bless our families and our beloved land.

* * *

Inviting you to join us in a pilgrimage to Vietnam: "Shrine of Our Lady of La Vang" (plus hopes, Nha Trang and Hanoi) on Sept. 21-29. For more details, please call Divine Mercy Tours, Inc., 522-8340 to 41; 521-4158. Or e-mail pilgrim@divinemercy.com.

* * *

A moment with the Lord:

Lord remind me that You are within, between and among us always. Amen.

Decide the MOA issues fully

DAYS AFTER THE SUPREME COURT ISSUED a temporary restraining order stopping the signing of the memorandum of agreement on ancestral domain (MOA-AD), a prominent Cabinet member asked me what I thought of the tribunal's action.

I told Ducle to Court. I replied that President Macapagal-Arroyo should be grateful to the Court and the justices for saving her from an act of bad judgment, and the country from civil strife, not to mention loss of face before the international community. I shall no longer detail the many declarable provisions of the MOA. They have been discussed in the news for the past two years. The media reports on the Supreme Court hearings.

Sufficient to say that even Solicitor General Agnes Devanadera has discerned it, unabashedly saying, "no matter what the Supreme Court ultimately decides, the government will not sign the MOA in its present form or in any other form." SolGen obviated the journey by absolving the government's power panel to give way to her "new" policy of "disinvestment, deconstruction, and rehabilitation."

Consequently, Devanadera asked for the dismissal of the petitions against the MOA-AD. She argued that they have become moot since the MOA was legally dead. Hence, there was no more actual controversy to decide. With this legal maneuver, the administration hopes to avoid the ignominy of defeat in and dismissement by the Supreme Court.

But the justices, undeterred by the lure of hypothetical or academic questions that do not raise "actual controversies," However, as exceptions to this rule, the Supreme Court has resolved public interest litigations that have technically been rendered moot by supervening events.

Exceptions to mootness rule. A recent exception is the landmark "David vs. Arroyo" decision on May 5, 2006. Recall that on Feb. 24, 2006, GMA issued Presidential Proclamation (PP) 1017 declaring a state of national emergency due to an alleged conspiracy among some military officers, other insurgency groups, and members of the political opposition ... to assassinate President Arroyo."

One month later, after Randy David and others

WITH DUE RESPECT

Artemio V. Panganiban

filed petitions challenging the proclamation, GMA issued a new order lifting PP 1017 because "the state of national emergency has ceased to exist." Due to this supervening event, the petitions (re PP 1017), the solicitor general asked for the dismissal of the petitions since "there was no more actual case or controversy."

However, the Court considered the motion, stating that the "moot and academic principle is not a magical formula that can automatically dispose of the issues raised, merely by the raising of a claim of mootness." It then fearlessly declared unconstitutional major parts of PP 1017.

It also appreciated the exceptions to the moot doctrine: "first, when there is a grave violation of the Constitution; second, the exceptional character of the situation and the paramount public interest is involved; third, when the constitutional issue raised requires (the) formulation of controlling principles to guide the bench, the bar and the public; and fourth, the case is capable of repetition yet evading review."

Another instance of a tribunal's dismissal a moot case is *Senate vs. Ermita* (Sept. 20, 2006). Here, Ermita-Senate was broadly translated before the Court could decide his petition challenging the Executive order that limited the officials who may be invited to the Senate or the House of Representatives to testify in aid of legislation. The petitioner moved to withdraw as the alleged witness in the 2004 election for a seat in the Bicameral Parliament.

Said the tribunal, "[T]his Court will not dismiss and is still called upon to exercise its duties as such and adjudicate petitions that cause has become moot and academic" due to Ople's death. "[T]here are ... times when although the dispute has disappeared, as in this case, it nevertheless

Comments are welcome at *thephilippinegood boy@hotmail.com*

Congratulations to Lt. Emmanuel L. Angeles and lawyer Jennifer J. Manalili who quietly took their oaths a few days ago as new Commission on Higher Education (CHED) chair and Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) administrator respectively. More on them later.

Comments are welcome at *thephilippinegood boy@hotmail.com*

Loving 'West Side Story'

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

WHEN I WAS A CHILD, MY MOTHER FELL IN love with the original cast album of "West Side Story," and to his days on end was treated to stereophonic renditions of "Maria," "Somewhere," "Tonight" and "One Hand, One Heart" filled our home, such that I have since committed much of the lyrics to memory.

And when "West Side Story" the movie was shown here, the whole family trooped all the way from Cubao to a theater in Escolta to watch Natalie Wood, Russ Tamblyn, Richard Beymer and George Chakiris and Rita Moreno play out the roles and stories of Maria, Tony, Bernardo and Anita. I loved the movie and so did my mother and mentor, who would, for days on end, hum the tunes and keep on each movie showing the "hits" and the "flacks" in a "mobile." This was because the scenes of the vivid New York street gangs were staged with Jerome Robbins' choreography and it gave the men in the family enough reason to watch supposedly hard-to-appreciate "sissy" dancing.

I suppose it's a sign of maturity that as one is in the audience at the opening night of "West Side Story," the revival by Singer of this 1957 original broadway production, marketed as the "first" and "finest" ever through an old and cramped New Yorker in rhythm in a still-vivid memory, I decided I "could" although I did cringe a bit at how dated some of the dialogue had become. When Daniel (Raul Bare), who has taken over the "Bernardo" role, addresses Anybodys (Cassi Bartolome), he tells her, "You're a real, bad kid, Anybody," and she replies, "Thanks, Daddy-o. Cringe inducing.

I CAN see how, when it opened on Broadway, "West Side Story," a re-working of "Romeo and Juliet" set on the mean streets of New York and in the midst of the rivalry between two adolescent gang, the Jets (Puerto Ricans), was considered ground-breaking and even experimental.

The late 1950s, after all, are considered the "golden years" of musicals, when the genre was at the height of its popularity and accessibility, the smooth lyricism and settlements of Rodgers and Hammerstein, say, or Rogers and Hart, Ho-off-beat yet-to-be-realized. Anyone demands that we see this piece, not only for the vindication of the outraged enemy, though gone, but also for the pain sure of and as a reminder upon the future."

Even the usually timid Warren Supreme Court found the courage to chastise the government for filing baseless criminal charges against three opposition congressmen under its watch, even after the final court promulgated the high court by steadily dismissing the charges on motion of then City Prosecutor Assistant Legal Counsel Sergio Apostol (Intengan vs. Sto. Tomas, Feb. 18, 1992).

Moot exceptions. Later, after declaring the public appeal to during three days of marathon hearings, the Supreme Court cannot starve the people by simply dismissing the MOA petitions on the pure-the ground of mootness. Chief Justice Reynato S. Puno himself has said that these cases are the most significant the Court has ever seen. The Court should, as it has done in PP 1017, rule on the petitions fully.

Thus, a decision on the merits would express hopes on the part of government and enthusiasm it. The Supreme Court has an obligation to promote the administration to clear duty to to defend the Constitution, promote the rule of law and stabilize down gravely alarmist actions. It should not let pass the restlessness, incompetence and opportunism of our inspirations.

Moot cases. Moreover, moot cases are graves, more how to pursue peace with the Moslem brothers without risking the disenchantment of the vast majority of our people and subverting our greater national interest.

Comments are welcome at *thephilippinegood boy@hotmail.com*

Mindanao right on our doorstep

MINDANAO, WITH ITS MUSLIM-CHRISTIAN TROUBLES, is far away and beyond the experience of most of us. There is, however, a Muslim-Christian struggle on our doorstep. And this we should be able to understand and recommend solutions to.

Some 370 Muslim families who are clustered tightly around their mosque have been resisting government efforts to erase them and their mosque from the reclaimed land in Manila Bay near Barbosa Church. The government wants them and the mosque out; the people want to stay alongside their mosque.

COMMENTARY

Dennis Murphy

Evictions are a common problem between government and urban poor people these days, but this particular eviction is complicated by Muslim belief. The president of the people's organization, Abdulmuttam Tomawalam, says Islamists forbidden to be moved if because of sensitivity, including Christian churches. The Muslims on the reclaimed land believe they cannot allow the destruction of their mosque. They must defend it. Their imams have told them they can't leave the mosque. The government believes it must clear the land, which is very valuable and destined for commerce, luxury housing and casino use.

Years ago in Lahore, Pakistan, I saw proof of what Abdulmuttam says that when the Marcos' uprising took place on Oct. 23, 1972, a month after the declaration of martial law, angry Muslims were determined to destroy the properties of Christians, but they didn't touch the churches in Marawi, Cotabato or Jerusalem.

The Muslim families living on the reclaimed land left Lanao del Sur when the Muslim-Christian war broke out in 1972. Some fled west to Sipan which, shortly thereafter, had its name changed to Zamboanga del Sur. They lived on land given 1992; the mosque was built in 1994. They are employed like other urban poor people: many are vendors. "If you have only P500 in capital, you can buy and sell something there in Barbosa," Abdulmuttam says. "Everybody's there."

There was a violent demolition on the reclaimed land in 1999. Houses were destroyed and people were hurt. As a result the families moved closer to the mosque. In June this year, the demolition team came again, but hundreds of Muslim men, faced them, spread out across the barren land prepared to fight with wooden clubs to protect their homes and mosque. The demolition team left. The government has offered large amounts of money, but the Muslims did not move.

At that time both Sen. Senator Noynoy Aquino and Bishop Broderick Pabillo spoke to the government on behalf of the people, and the issue situation has calmed down somewhat. There is no change in basic positions, however.

What is the solution in Barbosa? Before contemplating, people who both sides should be aware that there is of Moro-Christian problems through a lens of compassion and love and suspicion, which make any peaceful solution difficult to arrive at. In addition, the Muslims in Barbosa suffer from society's general prejudice toward urban poor people.

If the government proceeds with the demolition and eviction, the people will resist—evidently more likely to stay will be injured. Some may be killed. The government will then eventually have to destroy the mosque, a right that has a good chance of appearing in every newspaper in the world. Will the violence end there? Will there be revenge attacks on Christian churches, for example? The Muslim people believe it is God's will that they defend the mosque. People must obey government's laws, Sr. Paul tells us in Romans, but his principle applies when the laws do not contradict the laws of God or we know them.

If the government allows the mosque to stay, it will remain until the office buildings, luxury housing and casino facilities that will be built. Why not? The Catholic Church has a church on the reclaimed land. The two religious houses can remind the rich and powerful, including the gamblers, that there is more to life than money and pleasure. They will remind poor: something the rich to enjoy while they can, for all things are fleeting.

Does this case shed any light on the problems of Mindanao? Probably not much if it does at all, though it does highlight the possibility that alternative ways of thinking can provide solutions. Insanity can be defined, it is said, by repeating the same actions over and over and expecting different results. We have tried—over 40 thousands of them—the famous The National Housing Authority says there have been 150,000 poor families evicted from Metro Manila since 2004. The question can be asked, is the city any better off as a result?

The same solutions have been tried for years and years in Mindanao with the same unsatisfactory results. Are there alternative actions, alternate solutions?

Dennis Murphy works with the Oblate Peace Association. His email address is *opa@pldtdsl.net*.

Who wants Cold War II?

WORLD VIEW

Shlomo Ben-Ami

TOLEDO, SPAIN.—DOES THE WAR IN THE CAUcasus herald the coming of Cold War II? Or is it a Russian retaliation to the West to reshape the global power quo that has prevailed since the end of Cold War I?

Russia's military is certainly not fit for a global confrontation with the West. Not only did Russian intelligence fail to catch the stunning Georgian attack on South Ossetia, but Russia's electronic warfare system and ill-equipped ground troops looked like outdated Soviet-era relics.

Then again, a war does not have to simply extend the arc armaments to convey a powerful political message. After all, America's global leverage is dwindling even as its army remains the most sophisticated military machine in history. By showing that the United States has lost its monopoly on the unilateral use of force, and by exposing its vulnerability—which even the Soviet Union never did—Russia famously challenged the Pax Americana that emerged from the US victory in the Cold War.

The war in Georgia would not have happened if America had not mishandled its global hegemony so disastrously. The United States entered a unilateral mode of operation contrary to

TALK of the TOWN

Please send feedback to [redacted]

Julio Juan V. Sarmiento Jr.

MUCH ADO ABOUT SOMETHING

Local autonomy, federalism and BJE

By Alex Brillantes Jr.

FEDERALISM, LOCAL AUTONOMY, Devolution, Bangsamoro Juridical Entity (BJE). These issues have grabbed the headlines with the proposed and aborted signing of the memorandum of agreement (MOA) with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF). The proposed setting up of the BJE has been seen as a serious threat to the unity and to the territorial integrity of the Philippine State.

There have also been painful and emerging discussions on the proposal to set up a federal system in the Philippines, one that has been given greater credence with the recent visit of the President of the Swiss Confederation. It was on that occasion that President Macapagal-Arroyo reiterated her call for the adoption of a federal system in the Philippines.

In order to better understand the issues being raised in connection with the MOA and federalism, it is important to locate the debate within the context of the continuing demand for autonomy and decentralization among subnational institutions and local governments, including the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.

Resistance

The demand for autonomy among Muslim communities in southern Philippines is as long as the history of the country itself. The resistance against the autonomy among our Muslim-dominated communities to being ruled by the Manila-based Christian leaders.

Philippine political-administrative history is full of cases that resistance to the central authorities was not only among the Muslim-dominated communities, but also among the many subnational political institutions, from city mayors to governments in Mindanao to those in the Visayas. Cebu and Bohol were among the most vocal—vis-a-vis the failed regions in Southern Luzon and the Visayas—in Southern Luzon in 2001.

Looking at the "question behind the question," what all these manifest is a constant intervention among local institutions with central arrangements that perpetuate domination by "imperial Manila." Why should autonomy be based in the national capital decide on matters that they feel are purely local?

Subsidiarity

One way to address this question is to set up appropriate political-administrative structures that will enable more policies, programs and projects to be more responsive and appropriate to local needs in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity: actions should be provided by the lowest level of government that can do so efficiently.

What runs across the discourse of devolution, federalism and BJE is the constant issue of demand for autonomy and the right to chart one's development path. They only differ in terms of degrees of autonomy and extent of power of the subnational to a central authority.

The following continuum illustrates this:

Devolution—Federalism—Federation—Regional autonomy—Federalism—BJE—Separation

The continuum illustrates the extent to which power and authority are transferred or vested in subnational governments. One can see that federalism is the logical next step in the devolution process the Philippine context, federalism will enhance the autonomy of local governments.

Depending on the needs and negotiations between the federal and state governments, there will be responsibilities that will belong exclusively to the federal government (such as foreign affairs, defense and currency); powers that will belong exclusively to state governments (such as social services, agriculture and health); and there will be those that will be shared (such as environment, education and trade).

Separation

A look at the proposed MOA between the government and the MILF will reveal that it is a step further from federalism and may even lay the groundwork for outright separation.

Some of the provisions should be further examined and placed within the context of a sovereign Philippine republic. To what extent will the sovereignty of the republic be compromised in giving special recognition to the BJE? Of course, the more fundamental concern relates to the constitutionality of the proposed MOA.

This has been addressed and debated by many sectors, including the legislature, judiciary and civil society. Serious concerns have been raised ranging from the lack of transparency and consultation with the people concerned to the potential dismemberment of the republic. The MOA has since been henceforth junked by the administration.

Indeed, the debates surrounding the MOA, the BJE and federalism are all related to a more fundamental concern—recognizing the autonomy of subnational institutions. This is essentially what decentralization is all about. The decentralization process initiated by the Local Government Code of 1991—largely through the efforts of Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr.—established irreversible precedents in the countryside long held hostage by a highly centralized politico-administrative system based in Manila.

We have seen how hundreds of local government units (LGUs) responded to the challenges of rural development under a regime of devolution and local autonomy. The many local government awardees of the Galing Pook Awards Program—ranging from Marikina to Naga, from Malalag to Davao to Iligan in the Bicol—are testimonies to this. This is hope at the local level. In spite of the national government, devolution has provided the enabling environment.

It has been 17 years since decentralization was implemented in the Philippines through the enactment of the Local Government Code. It is imperative to learn from the lessons of history even as we seriously embark on deepening local autonomy through various politico-administrative instruments and structures, including the adoption of a federal form of government.

Some of the major issues, concerns and trends raised over the past decade and a half have been in the following areas: (1) local governments as initiators; (2) participation in the areas and indicators for local governance; (3) intergovernmental cooperation; (4) harnessing civil society and private sector participation; (5) redefining role of national government agencies; (6) mapping of local government units; and (7) federalism as the next logical step after devolution.

Three issues may also prove to be critical in the analysis of and proposals for a federal structure of government, and the continuing search for appropriate subnational structures and processes that will be responsive to the needs of the people.

- **Local government finances.** Devolution without financial decentralization is not meaningful.

One of the highlights of the Local Government Code was the transfer of financial resources to local governments through a mechanism called the Internal Revenue Allotment (IRA). However, while the IRA formula is supposed to be based on equity, efficiency and simplicity, local governments unfortunately ignored, experience showed that the amounts transferred were not sufficient to generally cover the costs of devolution.

Thus, the need to re-examine the IRA formula and include other factors such as poverty and performance into the allocation formula i.e. the more poor people in the area the more should be its share, and the IRA allocation should be linked to performance, especially in terms of its tax collection efficiency and ability to raise revenue.

- **Performance measurement and indicators.** An innovative way of measuring performance is the Local Government Performance Measurement System of the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG).

This measurement system focuses on five major areas: governance, administration, social services, economic development and environmental services, which shall be the basis of local government reports and would serve as a guide in the design and implementation of development programs and projects, including capacity-building interventions and assistance. This major development, however, has to be further strengthened.

Philippine local governments should take inspiration from other successful international practices such as the Bangalore Report Card system that has been replicated in other parts of the world.

- **Interlocal and intergovernmental cooperation.** The next logical step to local governance is a formal amalgamation in contradistinction to fragmentation.

Local governments may enter into interlocal cooperation in the delivery of services and performance of functions that cut across political and administrative boundaries—from solid waste management to economic, environmental and ecological concerns to inter-local health zones and trade-based agro-industrial zones.

Success interlocal partnerships have been proven effective in the cases of Metro Naga, Bagnio, La Trinidad, Iligan, Gabilan and Tubod in the Caraballos, the Cagayan de Oro-Iligan Corridor, Camanava, Calaocan-Malabon-Navotas-Valenzuela, Cebu-Cordemba, Legazpi, the Lanao Lake Development Authority, Metro Manila Development Authority, and intermunicipal agricultural committee of municipalities in Davao, among others.

There also have been successful cases of political amalgamation, any that of the Island Garden City of Samal that grouped five municipalities on the island, and Sarangani Bukas that saw the political merger of the city of Isulangan and municipality of Balut on the island of Sarangani. These cases should be carefully studied and documented, if only to sense the unfortunate trend among provinces that move in the opposite direction, that of fragmentation.

Oppose gerrymandering

Apart from being costly (creating new LGUs is a very serious matter considering the implications and tremendous costs involved in terms of personnel, buildings, waiver revenue involved), many of the proposals for fragmentation smack of a violation of gerrymandering. This trend should be resisted and curbed, considering the principles of economy, efficiency, effectiveness and even amalgamation should be encouraged far more efficient, responsive and effective local governance.

- **Civil society participation.** Also, the role of civil society participation in local governance has led to a redefinition of the notion of governance, one that goes beyond the formal structures and processes. This has been powerfully enunciated by the United Nations model and approach to governance—an excellent example of civil society-led governance in the delivery of housing at the local level. Many housing projects managed by the resurgence of government, business and civil society in addressing the major problem of squatting and homelessness at the local level. The UN model can be replicated by other local governments and should be supported.

- **Private sector participation.** LGUs have become more open to seeking out partnership with the private sector for effective governance—privatizing utilities, floating bonds, entering into build-operate-transfer agreements, etc. Intergovernmental mobilization and investment-oriented governance through such arrangements have been carried out by LGUs like the provinces of Bohol (privatization of water and electricity), Aklan (Small Business), the cities of Mandaluyong, Makati, Quezon and the municipalities of Victorias in Negros Occidental and Oroquieta in Misor Norte.

- **Evolving role of national agencies.** The DILG plays a critical role in the devolution process. Within the context of the "steering vs rowing" philosophy and in support of local autonomy efforts could be made to enlighten its role in capacity development and institution building. The DILG could take the lead in networking and partnering with local and international institutions, with the goal of monitoring their trends and transferring appropriate technologies, as well as providing the linkage between national departments and LGUs (as it has say in the oversight committees).

- **From capacity building to capacity development.** To expand to issues and concerns such as the "lack of capabilities" and post "administrative experience" of LGUs, efforts were made to develop and implement various training and capabilities-building programs aimed at improving the skills of individual local officials and employees. While these training programs are useful, it is imperative to expand "capability-building and-training" paradigm to general "capacity building" and "capacity development" that would go beyond developing individual skills so as to enhance local governments' institutions, structures and processes.

- **Leagues of LGUs.** Various leagues of local government units (Leagues of Provinces, Leagues of Cities, League of Municipalities and the Liga ng mga Barangay as provided for in the Code) have played a key role in advancing the cause of local autonomy. The League of Vice Governors, Vice Mayors League, Philippine Councilors League and National Federation of Young Legislators have considered their force behind the Union of Local Authorities of the Philippines.

The leagues have indeed gone a long way. They are at the forefront of resisting unlawful mandates and local interference, of proposing major amendments to the Code like reforms in the allocation of the IRA. They have entered into strategic alliances with like-minded sectors of society.

- **Federalism as the next step to devolution.** Federalism as an option should be considered to fully operationalize local autonomy and devolution in the country. There are downsides, however, to the adoption of federalism as in other Asian countries on adopting the federal system. Some argue that federalism is the most logical step after devolution.

In the Philippines, advocates of federalism say that the structure of the federal system will respond to the geographical obstacle and differences caused by cultural diversity on governance because it allows the maximum fit within the new time promising national interest, it is also claimed that the federal structure will accelerate the country's development and end the internal conflicts especially the ongoing separatist movements in Mindanao.

It is therefore noteworthy that the President recently issued an executive order to seriously study the federalism aspect of the proposed BJE. Essential to the issues is likewise an opportunity that should be seized.

This should be seen as an occasion to enlighten all sectors about the merits of federalism and devolution, more importantly, how the adoption of a federal system will further strengthen local governments and thus enhance decentralization for the improvement of the delivery of basic services. Many times, opposition to federalism is rooted in the lack of information and understanding.

(Alex B. Brillantes Jr., PhD, is the dean of the National College of Public Administration and Governance, University of the Philippines, Diliman, Quezon City.)

Across the NATION

2 coal plants to rise soon in Subic

QUICK FIX
A man collecting trash in highly urbanized Cebu City for sale to recycling and junk shops perfects his bicycle by the roadside to check its tires.

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—THE SUBIC BAY Metropolitan Authority has issued an environmental compliance certificate (ECC) to a company that is part of a joint venture which has proposed to build two 150-megawatt coal-fired power plants at the Subic Bay Freeport.

This was learned from former Zambales Vice Gov. Ramon Lachica II who furnished the Inquirer a copy of the ECC issued to the Taiwan Cogeneration International Corp., a partner of the Aboitiz Energy in the Redondo Peninsula Energy Inc. (RPEI), the project's proponents.

The ECC was issued on April 4 this year.

"The proponent was not known to have held public consultations before that date and yet, SBMA issued it an ECC. We have never been informed that it was issued an ECC," he said, adding that his copy was obtained from an SBMA source.

SBMA ecology chief Amorhyza dela Llana-Revel did not answer the INQUIRER's request to confirm the ECC.

DENR review

SBMA Administrator Armand Arreza said the ECC is "still subject to the review and validation of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources" since it is an environmentally critical project.

Arreza said Lachica was "not necessary" in saying that no public hearings were held.

Hearings, he said, were held for investors and residents of the freeport.

"There must be no tolerable and acceptable levels of pollution..."

The project's site is in Alas Naglaway in Subangan Cawag in Subic town, which is still within the jurisdiction of the SBMA, he said.

The DENR, he said, has ordered the holding of public hearings in Subic town and Olongapo City.

Dexter Calimpusan, Central Luzon director of the DENR's Environmental Management Bureau, on Friday said he does not have any information yet if the Environmental Management Bureau central office has issued an ECC to the project.

EPRI Director Miguel Abella, on Wednesday, confirmed that the EMB14 had given it an ECC.

Opposition

Olongapo City Mayor James Gordon Jr. and the city council have objected to the plan of EPRI to build and operate the coal-fired power plants.

A resolution, approved by the council on Aug. 27 and approved by Gordon on Aug. 28, cited environmental safety and public health as bases for turning down the project.

Gordon said the council urged the EPRI instead to "consider other alternative sources of energy for Subic Bay."

"The proponent assure relatively low emissions and the lowest environmental impact possible. Even as it does not diminish the fact that harmful emissions will definitely affect lives and the livelihood of communities in the next 50 years. There must be no tolerable and acceptable levels of pollution so as not to compromise the health and welfare of the environment and the communities," the resolution said. Roneric Bregio, Inquirer Central Luzon

Court won't issue TRO vs Kanlaon tree-cutting

By Carla P. Gomez
Inquirer Visayas

BACOLOD CITY—THE SAVE Mt. Kanlaon Coalition Friday again failed to get a temporary restraining order from a court here to stop the Energy Development Corp. from cutting trees at the buffer zone of the Mt. Kanlaon Natural Park.

This despite the effort of a group led by Bacolod Bishop Vicente Navarro, who braved the rains and staged a prayer rally outside the Hall of Justice in Bacolod City while the petition was being heard at the Regional Trial Court.

Navarro with 200 members of the coalition, seminarians, nuns and students stood outside the court house as lawyers argued their cases before Branch 051 Judge Rodney Rebanda.

However, Rebanda opted not to act on the TRO because two of the accused, Energy Secretary Angelo Reyes and the members of the DENR Protected Area Management Board, were not to be summoned to the hearing.

EDC had been granted permission by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources to cut 4,223 trees in the buffer zone where it is drilling geothermal power to boost the production capacity of its Northern Negros Geothermal Production Field in Mailum, Bago City.

A DENR report as of Aug. 30 said 2,440 trees have so far been cut.

Members of communities, including their children, who said they have benefited from EDC's presence in Bago and Murcia (see also gathered in front of the Hall of Justice yesterday to express their support for the geothermal drilling project.

Environmentalists and peace advocate Bella Lucot, 72, was the first to take the witness stand for the plaintiffs who had filed a class suit against EDC, Reyes, Environment Secretary Lito Atienza and the DENR Protected Area Management Board.

Wearing a green T-shirt with the message "Thou Shalt not Steal" written on it, accompanied by a yellow scarf and ribbon, the octoge of their protest, Lucot said she joined the class suit because of the environmental degradation that will result from the cutting of trees as the park's buffer zone.

Compostela Valley spreads health care through books

NABUNTURAN, COMPOSTELA Valley—The provincial government on Wednesday launched a family health book under a special program aimed at helping mothers and families learn and understand proper health care, officials said.

"The book, written in English and Cebuano, was launched as an intervention in the campaign to empower mothers and as a response to the high number of mothers and babies dying due to preventable health causes in the province," Gov. Arturo Uy said.

Compostela Valley has been posting massive reductions on health care but Uy said these deaths still occurred.

He said the provincial government has come out with the book, with the help of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Center for Health Development of the Department of Health in Southern Mindanao, to teach mothers and remind families about the importance of good health.

"Written in English and Cebuano, the book provides essential information to families especially on maternal and child care," he said.

Dr. Daphne Pangandian, the health program's provincial coordinator, said the book contains tips and plans on such topics as family planning, pregnancy, immunizations, sick child care and others.

Pangandian said under the program, they were aiming to distribute 6,000 copies of the book to selected residents in the towns of Maco, Mabini, Compostela and Montevista.

She said these were considered pilot areas because of the high mother and infant mortality rates there.

"Since this program, we're hoping to see happy families and a healthy province," she said. Primante Lim, Inquirer Mindanao

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INQUIRER Mindanao

Editor Jun Bondoyel
Bureau Chief Nina A. Alconaba

War over potable water looms in Davao

By Jeffrey M. Tupas
Bureau Chief

THE PEOPLE OF Davao were recently gripped by great anticipation—or apprehension—on who will emerge winner in the battle of two giants over potable water, a natural resource that Davao City is known for having one of the best in the world.

For the Davao City Water District (DCWD), the future of the city's water supply depends on the Tamugan-Panigan rivers, an alternative to the supply of potable water extracted from the Tikoco-Ugadas Watershed area reaching the homes of 750,000 people or around 150,000 households.

The Tamugan-Panigan River is expected to produce about 200,000 cubic meters daily to service an additional 50,000 households in 25 villages of the second district. This could mean that current consumers will have better quality of service.

DCWD officials assert that the rise in the city's economy cannot be denied that has the required quality, quantity and viability for the city's long-term water supply development plan."

The same water source is also being considered by Hedcor, the country's leading developer of run-of-water hydropower and an affiliate of the Aboitiz Group, as the site of a P6-billion hydroelectric project expected to generate 24 megawatts of electricity.

That output is enough to help avert the looming power crisis in Mindanao which is expected to hit its critical period in 2009.

STUDENTS in Davao City join the dance for peace as the city heads for progress.

Attractive project

Hedcor's presentation paper is attractive. It is prepared with benefits amounting to billions of pesos not only for the national and local government but also waiting for the local communities in for "hit" by the project.

The company intends to distribute electricity starting 2010.

It will be paying the eight communities that will host the project—Piklan, Tibanga-Tibanga, Suawan, Tambobong, Salaysay, Carmen, Cadalian and Tamugan—about P2 million to P3 million as sharing benefit, with P9.81 per kilowatt-hour every year from the first year of operation. Its four hydropower communities will be given P2 million as shares annually, apart from the local rentals expected to reach P1.8 million.

Davao City will also get P1.1 billion or 2 percent of the gross sales during the first year. Hedcor will also pay about P40 million in property tax and P3 million in business tax.

The project will improve access roads and open new ones, and provide irrigation water, watershed management and barangay development.

Memo of agreement

In January, Hedcor executives headed by Oscar Bengzon, president and chief operations officer, signed a memorandum of agreement with leaders of the host communities in the three municipalities for the three mini-hydroelectric projects.

Bengzon said the company had started building a good relationship with the people in the eight villages in 2006, no wonder many of the village leaders favored its project over that of the DCWD.

Datu Nicki Lagao, chief of the tribal group in Tambobong, said their approval to Hedcor's project was based on the promised development and jobs. The project will create about 900 jobs, mostly for the local residents, Bengzon said.

But, according to the DCWD, the presence of Hedcor will "seriously threaten the city's water supply ... The hydropower plant will compromise the DCWD's mandate to provide the most basic need of the populace—water."

The proposed hydropower plant of Hedcor will be built upstream of the infiltration gallery of the DCWD, or the upper portion of the Tamugan-Panigan River.

Fears of drying up

The water district said Hedcor's project could not coexist with that of the DCWD based on their original plans because the setup would dry up portions of the river usual on the reliance needed by the DCWD's consumers.

Hedcor originally proposed to put up its plant above the Infiltration gallery, at the junction of the two rivers at the lower portion of Barangay Tawan-Tawan. This would dry up a long stretch of 10-to-15 kilometers from the infiltration gallery to Hedcor's hydroplant because the power firm will be diverting the flow of water to waterways through its weir (dam).

Hedcor will put up weirs from the upper reaches of the Tamugan and Panigan rivers, which will divert all a new reservoir box junction at 508 meters above sea level, or 136 meters higher than the infiltration gallery of the DCWD. From that point, a single weir of more than 2 km will be built to end in a Hedcor penstage, which is connected by another 4.6-km weir leading to the Hedcor power house and tailrace.

"This setup will dry up vital portions of those rivers, which will lead to both immediate and long-term adverse effects on our project," a DCWD paper said.

Hedcor Gamboa, general manager of DCWD, said the plan of Hedcor might seriously deplete water supply in the

> 'Groundwater, contrary to popular belief, is finite and must be utilized wisely...'

area, affecting the public across its potable source. She said the city's future water source would be compromised.

Water permit, but no ECC

She criticized the granting of a water permit to the Tamugan-Panigan rivers to the hydroelectric firm by the National Water Resources Board (NWRB). The permit, however, a pending after the DCWD raised a protest. The Environmental Management Bureau has refused to give the power firm an environmental compliance certificate (ECC). Bengzon, of course, was not happy. He said the permit is the only critical for Hedcor to get started.

"We don't understand it. The policy is clear. We cannot get a water permit if we cannot get an ECC, but the NWRB is saying that we must get the water permit first before they issue the ECC. It's really confusing us. We see, if we can't get the permit, we cannot build the plant," Bengzon said.

DMS regional director Herminda Sarbella, in letter to Bengzon said the issue of water rights must be settled first by the NWRB. "It pertains to the use of surface waters of Panigan-Tamugan Rivers. The same surface water is also the lifeline of the proposed hydropower project of Hedcor Davao," as under the principle of primary jurisdiction, the NWRB is the proper agency to rule on the issue of water rights," he said.

Elenio Bengzon, executive director of the DCWD, said the two rivers would certainly solve the water supply problems of Davao for not the imminent power crisis.

"The problem of Davao City is not only the delivery of water to the homes of the people but also the supply of the water that must be delivered to the people. The water here is no use if we will, then we the power crisis but it will solve the water crisis," Bengzon said.

Groundwater source

Right now, over 89 percent of the water consumed by the city comes from groundwater extracted from the Talomo-Lipadas Watershed. With a daily extraction of 23 2,000 cubic meters from 58 production wells, sustainability is in danger.

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Dates: Oct. 13, 16, 20, 2008 & Nov. 3, 2008
Time: 2:30pm-6:30pm (4 hrs.)
Fee: Php 1,400.00
Teachers: Ms. Ariel Valderama
CIIT Web Designer

3D Animation Workshop (Blender 3D)
Dates: Sept. 27, 2008 & Oct. 11, 18, 25, 2008
Time: 8:30am-12:30pm (4 hrs.)
Fee: Php 1,000.00
Teachers: Ms. Ivy Dangla
Game Developer, Anino Games

Palace: GIs all look alike

From page A1

cited military general and former congressman.

Bunda said the joint military exercises with the US, called Balikatan, had bolstered national and regional security. Terrorists and communist rebels were "common enemies of democracy. So, therefore there is nothing wrong with cooperation" between the armed forces of the US and the Philippines, he said.

He said the presence of the US forces here was defined in the Visiting Forces Agreement which was in turn based on the Mutual Defense Treaty concluded in 1951 between the two countries.

Treaty provision

He said that after the pullout of the US bases from the Philippines in 1991, the VFA was needed to help in the country's development, including military capability. "Don't say there are joint exercises like the Balikatan," he said.

Defense Secretary Gilberto Teodoro similarly justified the continued stay of US forces in Mindanao, saying this was provided for under the VFA and the Mutual Defense Treaty.

Interviewed on Net Presidente Noli de Castro's weekly radio program, "Ito Sa Iyo, Bayan," Teodoro said the conduct of US military activities anywhere in the country was part of the mutual obligations of both countries under the treaty.

The US facilities being already set up in Mindanao were movable facilities that can easily be removed as US forces are mobile, he said. In the case of immovable facilities, these will be left for the use of the Philippines, he said.

US structures

Dr Carlos Salvador Teodoro, chief executive officer, the director of the Air Transportation Office in Mindanao, was interviewed about the widening of the US structures inside the airport and had written the US forces about it.

Teodoro said that Basilan should have motives to Philippine authorities because of dealing directly with the US forces, saying the setting up of such structures was permitted.

"In Basilan it was probably not aware of this. He should have coursed his complaint through the proper authorities," he said.

Teodoro also said a list of military activities to be conducted by both forces are approved every year by the Mutual Defense Board, which includes the US secretary of state and the Philippine secretary of foreign affairs.

"So long as those in a Visiting Forces Agreement, every year there will be training and exchange of opportunities between the US and the Philippines. And as long as there is a Mutual Defense Treaty, we have mutual obligations, particularly to mutual assistance for training and operation and humanitarian and disaster response," Teodoro explained.

Training RP soldiers

He said the US has been providing assistance on the training and professionalization of Filipino soldiers, as well as to the modernization of Philippine military vehicles.

He cited how in southwestern Mindanao, American soldiers have been training Filipino soldiers on some of the civic operations and conducting military operations into the Muslim communities.

In the case of the Mindanao conflict, Teodoro stressed that US forces were prohibited from taking part in combat or even leaving their military camps without clearance from the Philippine government under the Terms of Assistance third of nine.

"That's the situation right now. Sometimes we need a emphasis sa ating partnership with the US, particularly since there's an incident. They are quite sad [dog to help]. Like in the recent C-130 crash. We really need to view this with some balance," Teodoro said.

Not just Mindanao

Teodoro stressed that US military activities were allowed in the entire country, not just in Mindanao.

"The VFA covers American troops in the whole country. The only thing that is not allowed is for the US forces to be involved in combat operations. They are allowed to give military assistance, disaster assistance, joint training, and to humanitarian as they are doing in Sulu," he said.

Combat operations probe

A team from the Presidential Commission on the Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA) Cases is flying to Sulu and Zamboanga to investigate reports that US forces have joined combat operations in the area.

The team headed by Undersecretary Ed Rhoa Sulse will go to Zamboanga and Sulu to investigate the allegations, said Brig. Gen. Jorge Segovia, acting chief of the Armed Forces command center.

He declined further comment so as not to preempt the results of VFA Case investigations.

According to reports, an American soldier was hurt when Abu Sayyaf bandits attacked a military detachment supporting logistics to Patikul, Sulu, on Aug. 30. The military has denied this. Four Marines were killed in the ambush.

"No US personnel was involved," Col. Erwin Tores, the AFP public information officer, said a radio broadcast.

Zamboanga City Mayor Celso Lobregat said he doubted that US forces had taken part in the fighting as the VFA prohibits this.

"They're more into humanitarian missions. But as far as engaging in combat, they're not involved," he said.

"As a soldier and officer, I regret the conflict to be fought by us. The military should not allow anybody to lead [our operations]," Datlpe said.

Relief efforts

Administration Sen. Juan Miguel Zubiri defended the presence of American soldiers in Mindanao as one of Muslims, saying they have been helping in relief efforts in the towns ravaged by typhoons and the ongoing conflict.

Zubiri, a board director of the Philippine National Red Cross and a former Filipino soldier, in Bukidnon, said it was US soldiers with their helicopters and planes who helped the PNRC bring relief goods to Bobi after Typhoon "Frank."

He said the US troops' help is not limited to military soldiers was welcome considering the "volatile situation" in Central Mindanao.

"As long as they do not engage in the conflict, and just limit themselves to training and helping in the relief operations, they are welcome [to stay]," Zubiri said.

Issue to SC

Tarradabas Bayan Alawang Makabayan said it hopes to bring the issue of the alleged unconstitutionality of the VFA before the Supreme Court.

The high court has set for Sept. 18 for oral arguments on a suit that Bayan filed last year questioning the constitutionality of the VFA.

The case stemmed from the US invoking a VFA provision that allowed it to take custody of Daniel Smith, the US soldier convicted for raping a Filipino woman in Subic. The case is on appeal at the Supreme Court.

"Our lawyers will question the duration and scope of the seemingly permanent presence of US troops in Mindanao," said Bayan secretary general Renato Reyes.

Virtual blessing

Reyes said the continuing presence of US troops in Mindanao were beyond what the Senate contemplated when it deliberated the VFA in 1999.

"The US troops have been in Mindanao for 7 years. Isn't that virtual basing?" he said. With reports from TJ Burgonio, Delon Tinday Jr., Jerome Aning and Cynthia D. Balana

Chavit NSA posting 'better than Gov Palin's'

From page A1

He said critics cannot say that Singson has no expertise in the post he will be occupying.

"He is always a political leader. He has been a governor for the longest time," he said.

Bunda said that Singson's accepting the appointment means that he and the President had already settled their differences.

He urged Singson and Arroyo to pull out of the administration camp after Mr. Arroyo granted executive clemency in the 76-year-old Bunda, who was given a life sentence by the then-Sandiganbayan anti-graft court that convicted him of plunder last year.

"There's no [animosity] between them at all. That is the nature of politics," said Bunda.

Boy Respeto, national executive director of ruling Lakas-CMD, defended the Singson appointment.

"In terms of political experience, he's a veteran. This is one of the very, very important critical positions that demand the full trust and confidence of the President," said Respeto, a former undersecretary at the Office of the Presidential Adviser on Political Affairs under Gabriel Claudio.

Not Gonzales' replacement

Respeto said Singson was loyal to the President, and that his appointment was supported by Lakas.

"Other people would feel bad [about the Bunda pardon.] Chavit merely expressed his sentiments, but his desire is to help the President and the country prevailed in the end," said Respeto.

Singson is the Lakas regional chair in the Ilocos region and is such is "one of the pillars of the ruling party," he said.

Respeto said Singson was not being promised to replace National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales soon as Malacañang has the latter has lost the confidence of Ms Arroyo owing to the collapse of peace talks with the secessionist Moro Islamic Liberation Front.

Chavit: I just want to help

Presidential Gov. Singson said he did not consider his appointment as deputy national security adviser political payback.

Singson, a losing senatorial candidate of the administration Team Unity in the 2007 elections, said he did not seek the position from the President.

In a telephone interview, he said he accepted the offer to replace retired Lt. Gen. Pedro Cabuay because he wanted to help the country.

Reports said Cabuay was moved to the National Intelligence Coordinating Agency effective Aug. 31.

"Secretary Ermita called to inform me of my appointment on Thursday. I accepted it because I believe I can help the Arroyo administration in its peacemaking efforts," he said.

"I could have asked for a more lucrative and even higher position but I just wanted to help [the government]. I'm solving national problems, like those in Mindanao," he said.

Singson said he would immediately confer with Ermita to map out possible solutions to the conflict between the government and the MILF.

He said he is qualified to hold the position because he has grasp of issues concerning peace and order, citing his experience in local government.

He has served variously as governor and councilor of Ilocos and governor and representative of Ilocos Sur.

Singson said he was among the local officials who helped solve the peace and order problems in Ilocos Sur, particularly the violence brought about by the rebel-sold (Ilocano soldiers or Ilokos) guns in the 1960s through the early 1970s.

"I was able to transform those lost their sons at the time [of the rebel-sold guns] into peaceful citizens," he said.

What about Tesoro?

Opposition Sen. Aquilino Pimentel yesterday questioned what is in store for Tesoro Aquino-Oreta, the ex-senator who was another losing Team Unity candidate in 2007.

"We await with bated breath for Sen Oreta's appointment," Pimentel said in a text message, noting that the losing Team Unity bets were being appointed one after the other.

Pimentel said that Singson was qualified for the post, qualifying that with "after all, as DMA, qualifications is an elastic or rubber binders of power bills to a bank teller's counter."

"To GMAs mind, Chavit will probably supply the agency with more mature input from his vast political experience," he said.

He added that in Singson the President is assured of "full loyalty."

Sen. Alan Peter Cayetano said the appointment did not surprise him, as he said that was Ms Arroyo's style.

Security 'expert'

Administration Sen. Juan Miguel Zubiri welcomed Singson's appointment, describing Singson as an "expert" in internal security issues.

"Being in the national campaign with him, I was able to find out that he was an expert when in comes to internal security problems," said Zubiri, who ran with Singson under the administration party in 2007.

He said this could be seen in the way Singson handled the communist insurgency problem in the Ilocos region, where his rural local officials took up to Singson as a "big brother to settle issues of peace and order."

In a radio interview, Sen. Manuel Roxas said it would be up to Mr. Arroyo to explain her decision to appoint Singson.

Presidential prerogative

Sen. Rodolfo Biazon, chair of the Senate national defense committee, refused to comment whether Singson was qualified for the post, saying the appointment was "a presidential prerogative."

He said the position of national security adviser "is a specialized position that requires experience."

Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile said

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
NEWS
SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, 2008

Choice of Imelda as DepEd honoree slammed

By Jerry E. Esplanada

THE CHOICE OF FORMER FIRST LADY Imelda Marcos as "giant of honor" at a youth leadership conference to convene in Baguio City has raised a furor among education officials, as well as various teacher and student groups.

The controversial gift of the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos will be honored for her "contributions to Philippine culture and arts" at the DepEd's annual National Leadership Training for Student Government Officers at Teachers Camp.

The four-day conference is a project of the DepEd's Center for Students and Co-Curricular Affairs, or CSCA.

At the same event, the department will formally designate Filipino actor Jaime Bilbao as its "youth spokesperson."

Teacher and student groups, some DepEd executives, as well as top officials of the National Commission on Culture and the Arts (NCCA) expressed "shock and dismay" at the CSCA's choice of role model.

"It's truly disgusting," said Antonio Tinio, head of the 15,000-strong Alliance of Concerned Teachers.

"Our schools should be teaching the youth that Ferdinand and Imelda Marcos led the most brutal and corrupt dictatorship this country has ever seen. We're outraged that DepEd will provide her with such a venue. We won't just let this pass," Tinio said.

Education Undersecretary Vilma Labrador, NCCA chair, and NCCA executive director Cecile Guidote-Alvarez called the decision to invite Marcos "very insensitive to the sacrifices of the victims of martial law, including a number of public school teachers."

Both Labrador and Alvarez consider themselves "victims of the Marcos dictatorship."

The NCCA chair, who will represent Education Secretary Jesli A. Lapus as the conference's keynote speaker, said she "didn't know (Marcos) would be attending the same event."

Labrador said she was "not consulted [by CSCA executive director Jory Bilasel about this matter."

Decision not cleared

For his part, Lapus said the decision to invite the former first lady was not cleared with him.

"I haven't seen the program," Lapus told the Inquirer.

Asked to comment, Pelaez said "Mrs. Marcos is known for her contribution (to the arts."

Pelaez said "it was a suggestion by some people to invite her. They told me she was invited recently by the University of the Philippines College of Public Administration."

Bilasel, however, did not say who made the suggestion.

Renee Crisostomo, president of the militant League of Filipino Students, called the DepEd decision "ridiculous and an insult to the nation's whole war victimized by the Marcos dictatorship."

Mitzi Hilario, head of the National Union of Students of the Philippines, said "with such a decision, the DepEd has apparently become ignorant and insensitive of our history."

On the choice of "youth spokesperson," Hilario said Bilbo "isn't even a product of the Philippine educational system."

Josua Karlos Manning, deputy secretary general of the College Editors Guild of the Philippines, said: "What we need are stars in quality education, not publicity stunts."

"Why has DepEd chosen a foreigner who barely speaks Filipino to be its spokesperson? On the other hand, he's a good choice if they want to highlight how deeply entrenched the colonial orientation is in our educational system," Tinio said.

Atienza: Harper not off hook in tree-cutting

By TJ Burgonio

ANTIPOLO/BENEDICT SECRETARY LITO ATIENZA yesterday push pushed Manila Mayor Alfredo Lim's pronouncements absolving the head of the bureaucracy administration of any liability in the wanton cut of trees at Plaza Roma.

"How can he clear anyone when the case is still being investigated by the proper department, which is the DENR [Department of Environment and Natural Resources]?" Atienza said in a phone interview.

Atienza, Lim's political rival in Manila, said the mayor's pronouncement would not influence the outcome of the DENR's investigation into the cutting of 20 trees at Plaza Roma, including old narra and mahogany trees.

"The precipitate, hurried opinion does not change the course of our investigation, and the case, if warranted, would be lodged with the green courts that are in place to handle environmental laws," Atienza said.

Lim, citing the city government's investigation, had said there was no evidence to incriminate Administrator Anna Marie "Banal" Harper had ordered the contractor to go beyond the limits set in a DENR permit for the tree-cutting.

Endangered species

The city government, however, said the contractor, Fernando Simborio of Green Philippine Nursery Plants, would be charged with violation of Presidential Decree 953, which penalizes a person who uses, damages or injures a tree.

The DENR has given Harper seven days to explain the tree-cutting and recommend to file similar charges against her under the principle of command responsibility.

Harper could face a two-year jail term or a fine of P5,000 or both under Section 2 of PD 953.

Harper, according to DENR, was given a permit to cut 27 trees but ended up cutting 29. The DENR has issued Harper a notice of violations of four of 30 rules set in the permit, including failure to coordinate with barangay officials.

The narra and mahogany trees, endangered species, should have been halted to keep them alive and transferred elsewhere, the DENR said.

Harper has denied causing orders to cut the trees.

'Law applies to all'

"This case rightfully belongs in the prosecutor and should be prosecuted by the green tribunal even when Harper is a government official," Atienza said.

He added: "The law should apply to all, as generally handled about in Manila. As they say, 'Otherwise, none at all.'"

Meanwhile, Jerry Papa, president of Barangay Kalikasan, lambasted Atienza for his double standard on environmental protection.

While he has questioned the cutting of trees in the Manila plaza, Atienza has not accorded enemies to cut the trees along MacArthur Highway in Bulacan and in Mt. Kanlaon National Park in Negros Occidental, Papa said.

Atienza even failed to stop the Quezon City government from destroying the trees in front of the DENR building to give way to a bridge sidewalk, he said.

"Stop stalling all remaining trees. Our forest cover is down to 15 percent and global warming is intensifying," Papa said. With a report by Nina G. Santos

Aplus METRO
Editor Ester G. Dipasupil

NOT A FEW GOOD MEN

Everyday road heroes prove honesty still alive

'Those Bayani ng Kalsada are pretty good fellows'

By DJ Yap

A FUNNY THING HAPpened to cab driver Venecio Atillo on his way to an interview with the Inquirer in Makati City one rainy Friday afternoon.

He was on a bus seated beside an elderly couple. The woman was telling her companion: "You know, there are no good men anymore." The man replied: "That's true."

Then the man, eyeing Atillo's cap, reminisced with the words "Bayani ng Kalsada Oliver of the Road," suddenly blurted out, eyes twinkling: "I did hear though that those Bayani ng Kalsada are pretty good fellows."

Atillo could only smile.

Soon they were talking unintentionally about what being a highway hero means in real life, one of the 10 winners of last year's "Bayani ng Kalsada," Goodyear's search for drivers who have shown heroism and exemplary character on the road.

It seemed the lesson to Atillo's fellow passengers was clear. There are actually a few good men left out there.

Atillo, a resident of Marikina City, has been driving a taxi for almost 30 years. In that span of time, he has returned countless wallets, cell phones, briefcases, and other such valuables inadvertently left by his passengers in the cab.

WHEN he gave a speech recently before a group of schoolchildren, Ramelo Bathala, a jeepney driver and "Bayani ng Kalsada" winner, told them to "just always try to be a good person."
—PHOTOS BY DJ YAP

VENICIO Atillo, a taxi driver for almost 30 years, has lost count of the number of times he returned items left in the cab by his passengers.

Once, a passenger, a student at a Manila university, even left a pair of brand new shoes that got the sentimental attention of some of his family members.

Returning lost items has become almost a habit for the 58-year-old father of five.

"I never feel imagined. Some of my relatives sometimes tease me to keep them but I never do. I believe in karma," Atillo told the Inquirer.

He recalled how his son-in-law was so taken with a digital camera he bought home one night (having discovered it was) that a passenger had left in the back seat) that he offered to buy it for half the original price.

Atillo said no. He later found the owner through the help of a radio station.

His grateful passengers often reward him with cash or souvenirs, even lunch. Atillo said he never expects or get anything in return, but is happy to receive whatever they can give him.

He once returned a deed of sale to a property in Antipolo City worth P7 million by tracking down the owners through a passenger receipt.

PACO Church on Pix Street

THE LAUREL residence on Pestalozzi Street

PAST REVISITED

The changing face of Paco

By Gloria Ganditerena-Galay
Contributor

THE LATE NATIONAL ARTIST for Music Ernani Lucentes S. Cualing was one of the many distinguished personalities who enriched the historical ambiance of the Paco community in Manila.

Born and raised in the family mansion on Pestigan Street, the man-o-respected, active and generous member of the parochial enclave, now administered by the pioneer CICM Dutch/Flemish missionaries in the 1900s.

There were countless other illustrious "Pacanians"—stars of lawyers, political and legal luminaries, arts and music icons, revolutionary heroes who eventually made their mark in the country's history.

It is a pity that today's residents—a curious mix of small-town transients and adventurous entrepreneurs who now outnumber the dwindling ranks of original old-timers—know so little of their community's distinguished past.

In unbridled Dutch privileged beginnings, we divulged some historical data from an article "The Elixir Bundles of Peace," written by the late Bienvenido "Bobi" J. Valdez, enumerating and then resident historian chronicles the had written it for the special San Fernando de Dilao Paco Quadricentennial souvenir issue of 1990.

It was a herculean effort by Bobi, who for years enjoyed a decade of colonial writing ("Did You Know That?") for the Paco parish newsletter, the Parish Sentinel. (The monthly newsletter, edited by this writer, was a brainchild of then parish priest, Bishop Teodoro C. Bacani Jr., who had asked me to succeed in the role from the CICM pioneers, the first from the Filipino clergy.)

Bobi had gone about this exhaustive historical task through time" armed with maps of the community, checking and rechecking particular sites and information as he talked to residents of parishioners long gone. It was a work of love.

Pestalozzi Street was the main residential street and honors former President Jose P. Laurel Sr., legislators Jose Yulo Jr. of Negros Occidental, who became House Speaker, senator, justice secretary and chief justice; Don Quintin Paredes of Aliw and Pedro Valdes Lozagon of Pampanga (who was father-in-law and ambassador Carlos Valdez).

Judges' row

The street was also "judges' row." Here resided former Chief Justice Ricardo Paras Sr., Supreme Court Justice Antonio Horilleno, Court of Appeals Justice Vicente Santiago, Manila Municipal Court Judge Jose Noble, Court of First Instance Judges Jose Sanandres of Batangas and Roman Cruz Jr. (father of J. V. Cruz, former ambassador and press secretary).

Also residents of Pestalozzi Street were artist Fabian de la Rosa, columnist Godofredo Rivera Jr. of the private Tribune, former National Library director Mariano Ramos and Manuel Bonoan (a relative of former President Manuel Roxas); businessmen Jose Lanuza and Don Celestino Antonino, to whom home an elementary school was named; and the Gonzalez family, who owned what is now the St. Peter the Apostle Parish Church and school.

On Merced Street lived former Vicente Fragante, Gervasio Hernandez, former National Library director Lulu A. Montilla; former Chief Justice Jose Concepcion; Tony Villanueva, an Olympic basketball player; sportswriter Charlie Neora, and the Carbonnell brothers: Editorial cartoonist Liborio, a.k.a. Gat and journalist Jose a.k.a. Johnny.

Pio Street, on which the parish church is located, was home to Mariano Ylagan legislator Rafael Moran Sr., father of former local government undersecretary Rafael Moran III.

GRAND FINALE Street once lived former President Jose P. Laurel Sr. and Ex-House Speaker Jose Yulo Jr.

Parallel to the Street, on Leroy, was the home of former University of the Philippines president Salvador Britanico.

The first appointed mayor of Manila, Tomas H. Earnshaw, and city fiscal Roman de Jesus were neighbors on San Antonio Street. Another distinguished neighbor was Pedro Chanco, registrar of the UP College of Medicine and father of Doris P. Chanco, who rose to journalistic eminence for his newspaper columns.

Echa's home

Sec. Sequiro Street, that bends discreetly on the patio of the parish church, was also a veritable Who's Who locale. This was where scholar and historian Epifanio de los Santos, who was born in Malabon, lived. In the 1920s, he served as librarian of the First National Assembly and later became director of the Philippine Library and Museum. How many in Paco are aware that one of the community's diverse residents is now honored in the largest, busiest thoroughfare in Metro Manila?

Sto. Segundo had other notable distinguished residents: Dr. Lauro Panganiban, a trustee of Far Eastern University, whose daughter Charito became the wife of Aklanon Melchor Echauz Jr. and Dr. Abad Santos, one of Manila's earliest female judges and niece of Filipino martyr Jose Abad Santos and of Dolor Abad Santos, the father of socialism in the Philippines.

This writer remembers with nostalgia that the apartment he family had occupied for four years (Dan Chino Gonzales (1963-1997) on the avenue of San Segundo) and Merced Streets used to be the home of the famous ballerina, Joji Peña, who later married the reputable Dr. Herminio Velarde Jr. of the Philippine General Hospital.

In the same compound lived the family of internationally renowned violinist Oscar Yatco, who would spend his vacations away from studies and concerts there.

The main community street, Herran (now Pedro GIl) was popular for its row of shops, foremost of which was the famous Bakery and others offering bargain sales from furniture to clothing materials.

Our Paco historian also mentions in his article that former Court of First Instance Judge Jose Escobarte and former Manila police chief Col. Antonio Torres lived on Herran.

Mentioning Herran, however, would not be complete if we didn't underscore the following information. The late journalist Mariano V. Soliven came to his boyhood in the family compound near the Paco market, with his siblings and widowed mother Milagia.

'Paco Boy'

He had served as sorsyan (nine boy) during Mass and liturgical rites at the Paco Church built by the venerable Fr. Gaudencio Aldendorffer. Such was his fondness for the community that he gladly contributed a nostalgic piece, "Paco Boy," for the first home souvenir issue in 1991, at this writer's request.

Finally, on Calle Herran was born another National Artist, this time for Literature—the novelist, poet, playwright and essayist Nick Joaquin. Paco is deeply honored!

What Paco is the long line of original Paco residents who, by their lives, their achievements, have enriched the illustrious identity of the community.

Unfortunately, the massive demographic displacement that is sweeping a nationwide march has not spared the once aristocratic Paco community. It "new" identity is unfolding, shaped by inter-marriage, foreign investments and economic dictates.

The Catholic ecclesiastical presence, though, still animates today's clergy-parish leader partnership. It is a confidence-building one. Even from a deeply rooted evangelical thrust, continued by missionary zeal, from the original Franciscan friars to the Belgian fathers and today's Filipino diocesan clergy.

But the challenges to missionaries in the widening areas remain as numerous as they are daunting.

Writing about these challenges in the 404th Paco parish feast souvenir issue in 2003, Panong Lingkod Pio M. Claro, says, "The parish is marked by light and shadows. The light is the physical changes undergone by the church, particularly by its interior genius. Monsignor Domingo Cirilos Jr. ... (and) the visible efforts of the formation program of past by leaders (Nuevo de Guzman, Beatrice Diez, Nenay Bunod, Jojo Dollosing, Virgilio Hernandez).

"Undoubtedly, the parish leadership had been building on the selfless involvement of a network of community pioneers—the Mendozas, Altamiranos, Carrupidos, Carpios, Moreno, Pachecos, Calderons, Sobchuks, Mallorcas, Dalisays, Lantins, Del Rosarios, Castro-Domingo, Bathistons, Manasares, De la Peñas, Uys, and a host of Sto. Alfonsus. They functioned as an extension of the grace family, with apostolic roles.

"So far the shadows, there are outlines in the emergence of the transient families who are, however, inhibited by their urgent economic concerns from rising to the challenge of parish leadership. This in turn affects membership numbers in the Basic Christian Community organizations. The growing number of other denominations and new sects is also an emerging shadow."

This observation bears because it tells the truth—about the same (and positive) of parish life, as only its Paco historian-chronicler can observe.

The Paco community which celebrated its 409th anniversary last month, has cross a long way from what it used to be in Dean Eusebio's time.

Will it survive the changes, the challenges of the future?

Everyday heroes on the road prove honesty is not a dying virtue

From page A17

"The woman was so happy she said she'd been crying for three days when she realized she lost the deed of sale," Ballido said. "She didn't give me anything but she took me out to lunch at Jollibee."

Ballio said it doesn't matter how much the item costs.

"I've returned a bag, a cookbook, cell phones, digital cameras, wallets, anything, as long as I can find the owner," he pointed out.

As a jeepney driver, Rosario Ballido, 41, doesn't find many occasions as Ailio does to return things left in his vehicle.

"When something is left behind in the jeepney, especially in the back, the other passengers get on it first. Sometimes it's even the driver who gets blamed for the loss," he said carefully.

But Ballido, another Imperial-ng Kabuhi driver, has shown a different type of heroism on the highway.

When not on duty, he transports sick neighbors to the hospital on his jeepney, thus he has come a makeshift ambulance for his community in Las Piñas City.

Go-to person

"It appears that word has spread in our subdivision that whenever someone has to be rushed to the hospital, they come to me," Ballido said in the same interview.

"I already know the Philippine General Hospital like the back of my hand," he added with a laugh.

Ballido, also a father of five, recalled how one of his neighbors, Edelberto Cosme, suffered a stroke one night.

"I think he was panicking and he was screaming. That's when he had an attack," Ballido said.

He rushed up driving Cosme to two hospitals after the first one could not immediately admit him. The doctors later told the victim's family that he would not have survived if he had arrived at the hospital any later.

"He's okay now. He can't speak that well yet, but I think he recognizes me," Ballido said.

He also recalled one incident in which a driver's hat and eyeglasses were left behind.

"I flew home to a private bus, glad but they wouldn't accept him. They said they didn't accept chance cases. So I had to rush him to a public hospital," he said.

Ballido seemed until a family member came for the victim and left soon after. He didn't get the chance to speak to the family—or even just to accept their thanks.

For his efforts, Ballido was also named one of Caltex's 10 Most Outstanding Public Transport Drivers of the Year in 2003.

He recalled speaking before a crowd of schoolchildren at a Manila school about the heroism of Ilalim Filipino Movement, an organization that honors simple Filipinos who show exemplary qualities.

Sound advice

"I just told them, study hard and work hard for your dream. Whether you become a lawyer or a doctor, just always try to be a good person," he said.

"That's the best lesson I hope my own children take to heart," Ballido added.

This year, Goodyear is conducting another search for drivers with exemplary characters like Ballio and Ballido.

"We call on the public to actively participate in the search by nominating members of their family or community who fit the criteria," said Goodyear Philippines president and managing director Jawed Joseph Moshi in a statement.

"We come across heroes' every day on the road; often unnoticed and unsung it," he said.

"They are those whose real greatness is not readily apparent. So let's take a second look at our humble, simple, ordinary neighbors who, because of their courage, integrity and compassion—the everyday things every day," Moshi said.

To nominate a Bayani ng Kalsada, one should fill out a form available at Goodyear Service Centers and Tyretru outlets nationwide, as well as the passenger offices of the Land Transportation Office and Land Regulatory Board.

Entries may also be submitted at the Goodyear Philippines office on Alabang-Zapote Road, Las Piñas, or at the Zest Asia office at Waterhouse 15, La Fuerza Compound, 2241 Chino Roces Avenue, Makati City.

Forms may also be sent via fax to the Goodyear office (8784394) or the secretariat (8937688). Nominations will also be accepted through SMS—text 4868 to register and send to 2209. The deadline for the submission of entries is on Dec. 31.

The contest has four categories: Public utility jeepney drivers, taxi/FX drivers, commercial truck/bus drivers and private drivers.

Each winner will receive P50,000 in cash; P500,000 personal accident insurance; a Prize Card pre-loaded with P10,000 in cash, a Starcraft road pre-loaded with P10,000, a wedding certificate worth P3,000, a Television Force gift pack, a final contender worth P10,000, a special jacket and a trophy.

"[I]t[S] [O]f the years, the lives of our [OFWs] have become intertwined with the world's citizenry as our nation has become increasingly integrated with international community."
BENIT KUBABLE, May 2007

GLOBAL Pinoy

Editor Gerry Lirio

Turn on your headlights
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This section is dedicated to Filipinos overseas toiling on land and at sea, in factories, in construction sites and in the homes of the world to secure a be[tter] [life] for [their] [fa]milies. [Th]ese are their stories.

Lawyer learns lessons from US, comes home

GOODBYE TO ALL THAT Grabbed Po Benito takes a final look at the Grand Canyon, a steep-sided gorge carved by the Colorado River in the Grand National Park in Arizona, one of the first national parks in the United States, before heading back for the Philippines for good.

By Brennan Cena

HAPPINESS IS NOT at all found in one's pursuit of the American Dream. Take it from lawyer Galahad Po Benito.

Po Benito, 37, had everything planned after earning his coveted law degree from the prestigious Tulane University, one of the best schools in environmental law in New Orleans, in 2000.

While his wife was being employed as a nurse in a US hospital, he was doing private practice in Pasadena servicing Filipinos on their immigration and real property cases.

They lived A la dolce vita for six years in the US. They had generously paying jobs and a small family of three.

But in 2006, he packed his household back to the Philippines and started living the simple life. They now live in Quezon City.

Po Benito had every reason to leave the proverbial "greener pastures" his family could have readily enjoyed. But it was not the life he dreamt of.

"My life had become so mundane that I saw no growth in the next 5 to 10 years," Po Benito told the Inquirer.

"There was nothing for me there except for the big bucks that I was to get compared to practicing here. We were not exactly happy."

While doing private practice in Pasadena in California, Po Benito confessed that he was practically not happy with how things were going. "Law practice, I soon realized, is not just a money-making venture. Eventually, you'll feel burn out and you'd long for that one thing that really matters to you." And he found it in environmental law practice in the Philippines, he said.

> When so many are chasing after the American dream, this Filipino leaves the US, saying he can see things clearly now

Sun-growing with others

Add to that was their son who also needed personal care.

Gabigati, their five-year-old, previously grew up in day care because since there was no other option for the couple both employed with their respective careers.

"It was a depressing sight seeing your child grow with other people," he said. "So we weighed every option at hand and decided to head home together."

Leaving the child in the careers didn't help him, obviously.

Up until this day, he said, his child could only utter a Filipino sentence once. He is having a hard time learning the language.

But thanks to the every-day experience in the US, he said, he learned several lessons that have greatly changed his outlook in life.

Po Benito extolled how he adapted to the monstrous environment and learned how to be on his own, unlike when he and his family were in Manila where they were constantly helped along.

"I had to drive a cargo truck to move our stuff to a new house. I couldn't imagine doing it myself," he said.

Like RP

Living in New Orleans, a third world state, he said, was very much like residing in the Philippines.

"There was corruption left and right, and the weather was even much like ours."

Painting a whole house and doing the plumbing were also things alien to him until he found himself actually doing it.

"I was not practical to hire strike to do those odd jobs. We had to be frugal and independent," he said.

During their stay, Po Benito and wife Genesse hightened their belts to afford the high-cost of living and to still set aside some savings.

Tuo enough, when they went home they had enough money to return. They are also now working for refusal on retirement and security funds they had put up while still abroad.

Environmental lawyer

But two years now, the Tulane-trained lawyer has touched base and has put his hands on environment protection, a matter close to his heart, he said.

Dr. Benito received his juris doctorate from Ateneo Law School in Manila in 1994. He was admitted in the State Bar of California and the Integrated Bar of the Philippines.

He has served as legal consultant to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources in Manila and as Court Attorney VI for the Supreme Court of the Philippines.

Dr. Benito has also served as an attorney with Philippine National Oil Company-Exploration Corp., Benguet Consolidated Inc., Bataan Law Office and Phoenix Iron and Steel Corporation, all in Manila.

At present, he serves as a professor of law at Far Eastern University-Institute of Law where he teaches environmental law, among other subjects. He is also working on his book on environmental laws.

Finding a law school to take his master's was no walk in the park. He scoured every school that would shoulder all his expenses, he said. "I was delighted to hear the news that I got accepted to Tulane. They agreed to reduce my tuition by half."

The environmental law as an area of practice has not yet been fully developed here in the country but the statutes were already in place 10 years ago, he said.

"We already have a number of laws in that country," he said. "The problem lies to enforcement, obviously. Anyone in the street claims that he is powerful, connected but barely a handful walks the talk."

Genesse now teaches at University of Santo Tomas while their now 7-year-old child is schooled in Books School in Kamputsan, Quezon City.

"We modified him from [a] creative [to a] world Filipino classes in Ateneo." But the child was raised in pure Filipino culture, he said.

The rush of living

If anything, Po Benito said he misses seeing Michael Jordan play live, and the rush of every day living in the US.

To top that, his experience in driving all the way to Houston to escape a hurricane that was to hit New Orleans was one for the books.

Aside from his coaching stint, Po Benito is on a part-time/on call engagement with a US law firm operating in the Philippines.

He also volunteered his services to Olivia Alcantara of Mother Earth Philippines on environmental campaign, and with lawyer Tony Oposa on his Climate Change Campaign.

Asked if he was any happier, Po Benito could only utter a loud "Yes!" saying nothing could top seeing his family intact and his career going gung-ho.

FAMILY FIRST Po Benito, with Genesse, and son Galagen. Life is all about choosing our love and living our choices.

Why travelers are sent back to RP

AFTER A LONG AND ill-fated journey to the US, a traveler may find himself being sent back immediately to Manila in a process called repatriation proceed. "Airport to airport" is the term used to describe this immediate deportation of travelers bound to the US.

Manila was recently ranked as a US citizen. He used his B2 visa to enter the US in his sixth trip sponsor who lives in San Francisco CA. His B2 visa was issued five years ago and he had used it several times to enter the US. This time, when he was asked the purpose of his entry in the US, he mentioned that he is married to a US citizen and that he intends to live with his wife in the US. Manila was subjected to a secondary inspection and was asked to sign a statement. The Customs and Border Protection inspector denied Manila's entry and was told to obtain the proper visa to enter the US.

He was "airport to airport" back to Manila. Thereafter, an immigrant visa petition was filed by his US citizen spouse on his behalf.

Expedited removal

This expedited removal of arriving aliens was adopted more than a decade ago and is found in Section 235 of the Immigration and Nationality Act. This provision allows the Customs Border Protection (CBP) inspectors at ports of entry to order the summary removal of an "arriving alien" upon determination of the existence of legal ground that warrants the denial of his/her admission.

Most communities visa holders are considered as arriving aliens. Green card holders may be considered as arriving aliens if they have been out of the US for an extended period of time. The determining factor in expedited removal is whether the individual has a valid visa to enter the US when he is examined with his/her intention of entering the US. Sometimes, the authority or identity of the travel documents may be put in question during primary inspection.

IMFO
Lourdes Santos Tancinco

Secondary inspection

The CBP officer questions the arriving alien during primary inspection regarding the purpose of the visit and the length of stay and then examines the person's passport. If there is doubt in the purpose of the visit or in the travel documents, the alien is referred to a secondary inspection.

During secondary inspection, the individual will be subjected to more questions about his/her intentions of entering the US. If there is a finding of lack of genuine travel documents, or improperly issued visa, or the lack of documents, grant and immigrant intent, the CBP inspector will ask more questions in writing. The Form I-867B will be used to interviewing and writing the statements of the individual. After the interview, the CBP inspector will ask the individual to read and later sign this form. Corrections may be made on this form before signing.

Political asylum

After the completion of this Form I-867B, the CBP inspector will make a determination whether to deport the individual immediately to the country of origin. While this is going on the individual is held by the CBP without an opportunity for a hearing. A finding of expedited removal will subject the individual to CBP custody until the next outbound flight arrives. Sometimes, the individual is detained several hours or even days under CBP custody waiting to be sent back to his country of origin.

It is during the secondary inspection that the individual intender is asked whether s/he claims a credible fear of persecution. This means whether there is a fear of returning to the Philippines based on political reasons. If political asylum is asserted at the port of entry, there must be real credible fear of persecution and not simply using it as an escape strategy to prevent the immediate deportation. In political asylum claims, other considerations are applied to a hearing before the immigration court.

No due process for aliens

Airport to airport is an extreme measure taken by immigration officers to ensure that individuals who do not deserve to enter the US are sent back immediately to their country of origin.

It is a very harsh rule as it is not unusual for an individual subjected to expedited removal to be treated like a criminal. They are placed in a segregated, locked area, questioned extensively without attorneys and are forced to sign a form which they may or may not fully understand.

Some individuals are not deserving of this treatment and may want to withdraw early in the process of their intention to withdraw their admission. Travelers are forewarned to be clear on their actual intentions consistent with the visa they are holding to avoid this brutal and unnecessary process from happening upon entry in the US.

Inquirer may be reached at lani@inquirer.com *or at* 8977777. *To learn more about relevant immigration issues affecting Filipinos in the US, watch* Iba Yan *Pinoy* Iba Amerika *aired at QTV every Sunday at 9 a.m.*

The WORLD

Editor Lorraine B. Queen

Isolation over, Gadhafi meets with Rice

GADHAFI AFP

TRIPOLI, LIBYA—FOR THE FIRST TIME IN MORE than half a century, a high-ranking US official, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, is in Libya. She arrived here on Friday to meet with the man whom Ronald Reagan famously called the "mad dog of the Middle East."

But that was then. Rice, after wanting at the Gaddafia Bab-Aziza Hotel here for an hour as the Ramadan sun set, got word that Col. Moammar Gadhafi was ready to receive her at his Bab al Aziziia residence—the same compound bombed by US air strikes in 1986 during the height of tensions with Libya.

Amid a storm of cameras and reporters, the welfect into the receiving room where Gadhafi stood waiting to greet her.

He didn't shake her hand; instead, he put his hand against his heart in a gesture that North African men often use to greet women, then motioned for her to be seated. It was a very different Libyan leader from the man who befriended an US presidents over the past four decades.

As far as the Bush administration is concerned, the Libyan leader is rehabilitated, his country removed from the US terrorism list, has dealt to the families of the victims of Pan Am Flight 103 on its way to being paid, Libyan stockpiles of chemical weapons destroyed and its nuclear weapons program dismantled.

His initial chat with Rice could not have been more pleasant. He politely inquired about her trip; Rice thanked him for his hospitality. After brief public chitchat, the Libyan authorities quickly shooed out the press while Rice sat, smiling broadly.

"I never thought I would be visiting Libya, or it's quite something," she had told reporters aboard her flight to Tripoli, noting that a lot had happened since 1957, when Vice President Richard M. Nixon visited Libya in the last trip here by a high-ranking US official.

Later, Rice and Gadhafi met one on one; state department officials said, for what had been billed as a more interesting private exchange than the usual diplomatic meetings.

After all, the Libyan leader had professed his "love" for the American secretary of state: "I support my darling black African woman," Gadhafi told the network Al Jazeera last year. AFP

Libya's tumultuous relations with the US

HERE IS A CHRONOLOGY of more relations between Libya and the United States:

January 1986—US President Ronald Reagan orders halt to economic and commercial relations with Libya, frozen Libyan assets in the United States.

April 1986—Libya blamed for bombing of West Berlin disco used by US servicemen that killed three people and injured more than 200.

April 1986—US aircraft launch Tripoli, Benghazi and the house of Libyan leader Moammar Gaddafi. Libya says more than 40 people are killed, including Gaddafi's adopted baby daughter.

December 1988—Pan Am flight 103 from London to New York blown up over Scotland, killing 270 people on board and 11 people on the ground in Lockerbie.

April 1999—Libya hands over two suspects in the bombing of Pan Am flight 103. They stand trial in the Netherlands under Scottish law. UN suspends sanctions against Libya.

January 2001—Three judges unanimously find abdel Basset al-Megrahi guilty of murder and acquit Al-Amin Khalifa Fhimah.

Megrahi is given a mandatory life sentence. In June 2007, an independent review body said Scotland's High Court should hear an appeal by Megrahi against his conviction.

March 2003—Libya reaches political agreement with the United States and Britain to accept civil responsibility for the bombing. Libya agrees to pay about $2.7 billion in total.

December 2003—Libya says it will abandon weapons of mass destruction programs and allow in international inspectors.

January 2004—Lawmakers arrive on the first visit by a US executive congressional delegation to Libya since Gaddafi came to power.

June 2004—US resumes diplomatic ties after 24 years.

September 2006—Libya signs a deal to pay $35-million compensation to more than 100 victims of 1986 Berlin nightclub bombing.

September 2004—President George W. Bush formally ends US trade embargo on Libya, rewarding it for giving up weapons of mass destruction but leaves some US sanctions-related sanctions in place.

Feb. 11, 2005—United States upgrades a restriction barring Libyan diplomats in the US from traveling more than 40-25 km from Washington and New York.

Sept. 26, 2005—Bush waives some defense export restrictions to allow US companies to participate in destroying Libya's chemical weapons.

May 15, 2006—US says it will take Libya off the list of countries deemed state sponsors of terrorism.

July 11, 2007—Bush announces he is sending the first US ambassador to Tripoli in nearly 55 years.

Jun 3, 2008—Mohammed Abdel-Rahman Shalgam, Libya's foreign minister, declares an end to confrontation with the United States in a visit to Washington, the first by a Libyan foreign minister since 1972.

Aug 14, 2008—Libya and the US sign a deal to compensate all US and Libyan victims of bombings or their relatives, clearing the way for the former foes to improve faltering ties. US victims covered include those who died in the 1988 Pan Am flight and the 1986 attack on a Berlin disco. Reuters

Alaska solons seek subpoenas in Palin inquiry

ANCHORAGE, ALASKA—SENIOR LAWmakers in the Alaska Legislature said on Friday they would seek subpoenas to compel seven witnesses to answer questions in an ethics inquiry into whether Gov. Sarah Palin, the Republican nominee for vice president, improperly put pressure on state officials to dismiss her former brother-in-law, a state trooper.

The lawmakers overseeing the inquiry said the investigator would deliver a final report by Oct. 10 to allow both sides ample time to respond before the presidential election. Palin, after pledging for weeks that she would cooperate with the investigation, has in recent days begun to challenge the Legislature's jurisdiction in the inquiry.

The list of people the investigator is seeking to question—including a top Palin aide, the state personnel director and the Cabinet-level commissioner of administration—indicates that the inquiry is focusing on accusations that the governor's office unlawfully breached the personnel file of the trooper, Mike Wooten. He has had a particularly contentious divorce and custody battle with Palin's sister.

The pursuit of the subpoenas, which are scheduled for a vote before a joint hearing of the Alaska House and Senate Judiciary Committees this week to be decided by the committees' members, Republican Hamilton Bowen, a longtime Anchorage prosecutor.

The ethics controversy stems from Palin's decision in July of Walt Monegan, the public safety commissioner, in what he has said was retaliation for his refusal to dismiss Wooten. Palin has accused Wooten of threatening her family and of drinking while driving, charges he denies. The governor denies that Monegan's dismissal was related to Wooten's case.

The seven witnesses who would be subpoenaed include some of Palin's primary aides. AFP

PAKISTANI Muslims walk near the Badshahi mosque after "Iftar," the meal to break the fast, during the Muslim holy fasting month of Ramadan in Lahore, Pakistan, on Sept. 5. During Ramadan, the holiest month in the Islamic calendar, Muslims refrain from eating, drinking, smoking, and sex from dawn to dusk.

Bhutto widower set to become president

ISLAMABAD— PAKISTAN lawmakers vowed voting on Saturday in a presidential election that puts opposition leader Senator Bhutto's widower Asif Ali Zardari is widely expected to win.

Zardari is the clear favorite in a three-way race to take power in the frontline state in the US-led "war on terror," a country riven by Islamic militancy and economic turmoil.

Security was tight as secret voting began shortly after 10 a.m. in the two chambers of parliament and four provincial assemblies.

In the northwestern city of Peshawar, where voting was also taking place among lawmakers, the insecurity was underscored when a suicide attacker rammed his bomb-laden car into a police checkpoint, killing eight people.

Dozens more were injured in the blast but the voting was not affected and no lawmakers were among the dead or injured.

Nearly 1,200 people have been killed in bombings and suicide attacks across Pakistan in the past year, in some seen as a backlash by militants angry at former president Pervez Musharraf's support for the United States.

Earlier, days in Peshawar, lawmakers fled the building where they were voting after a 5.6 magnitude earthquake hit parts of Pakistan and neighboring Afghanistan.

They returned shortly afterwards, however, after realizing that the quake was moderate.

Zardari himself has already moved house due to fears of assassination. He didn't vote in his home city of Nawabshah, but in the capital Islamabad, where he is expected to win easily.

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ZARDARI

Thai PM holes up at home

BANGKOK—THAILAND'S EMbattled Prime Minister Samak Sundaravej holed up at his heavily guarded home on Saturday as protesters vowed to continue disrupting emergency rule and hold marches demanding he step down.

About 120 riot police surrounded the 73-year-old premier's home, where a government spokesperson said Samak is working, in a state of emergency under the expanded control through a 5th day.

"The prime minister has no official functions today. He is working at home," Wichianchot Sukcharoen said.

Samak declared emergency rule across Bangkok on Tuesday to defuse violent political clashes between his supporters and antigovernment protesters, who have occupied the main government complex since Aug. 26 calling for him to resign.

Emergency rule, which prohibits gatherings of more than five people, has proved ineffective. Two university students were shot on Friday night by unidentified gunmen as they marched towards Samak's house, and about 2,000 people remain in the capital's protest camp.

University students also planned to hold marches on Saturday afternoon.

The military has not supported the emergency law, and Samak signaled his frustration on Friday at his increasing isolation.

"We have failed to tackle this problem through the courts, the military or by declaring a state of emergency. All has failed," he said, adding that emergency rule may soon be lifted. AFP

MSWATI III

In destitute Swaziland, a ruler who lives like a king

LUKHEMBE, SWAZILAND—ONCE UPON a time, a young and handsome king ruled over a land of mountainous splendor near the southern tip of Africa. He liked to party and so the people partied he took 13 wives, each of them a great beauty.

His countrymen wanted His Majesty to be happy but some also thought so many spouses were an extravagance for a poor, tiny nation. After all, the king, Mswati III, often traveled these wives a retinue, a palace and a new BMW.

A great many now seem heedlessness—in Swaziland, in fact. To prepare for the day—the 40-40 Celebration, as named to honor the king's 40th birthday and the nation's 40th year of independence—as were 15,000 area students sent both and a fleet of top-of-the-line BMWs was ordered for the comfort of visiting dignitaries.

Once again, some people wondered how the kingdom, Swaziland, could afford the expense. Some 1,500 travelled in private through the capital after seven papers said that several of the queens and their entourages had gone on an overseas shopping trip aboard a chartered plane.

As the big day neared, other persons drew thousands more into the streets of the country's two biggest cities. "The king spends our money and is not answerable to anyone!" complained Mario Masuku, the head of an outlawed political party.

The excellent of the discontentment flying rocks, looted goods from stolen-wide warehouses and vote set off a few small explosions. Others made impromptu placards with run-up cardboard. "Down with 40-40" read one, while another demanded, "Democracy now!"

Poverty has entrapped two-thirds of the people, leaving hundreds of thousands malnourished. Swaziland has one of the worst rates of HIV infection in the world. Life expectancy has fallen from 61 years in 1997 to barely half that now.

"How can the king live in luxury while his people suffer?" asked Sipheso Hlophe, a human rights activist. "How much money does he have in the treasury?"

The royal family controls a corporate business empire "to trust for the nation," investing in sugar cane, commercial property and a newspaper. Forbes.com recently listed Mswati III as the world's 15th wealthiest monarch, estimating his fortune at $200 million.

But is that one-fifth-any of the world? The king, after all, is the King. The poor, after all, are the poor. AFP

WHAT'S INSIDE
■ $3-M penalty also applies for Pacman vs Hoya /A22

Sunday SPORTS
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■ It's Serena vs Jelena /A23

Blue Eagles rip Archers a 2nd time

RP Youth clips Lebanon for 7th place

TEO NOKIA-RP YOUTH TEAM CAPPED ITS Tehran stint with a 74-63 victory over Lebanon yesterday at the ninth brackets to finish seventh in the Fiba-Asia Champs' ending for junior men.

Matthew Wright, Mark De Guzman and Ryan Reese Garcia combined to help the Philippines seal the victory.

The Filipino-Canadian Wright nailed a three-pointer with 42 seconds remaining and Garcia sunk the marginal free throws off a steal and a Lebanon turnover to help the country match its 1996 finish.

De Guzman kept the Lebanese from taking control by committing a series of foul-hook plays with Garcia and hitting hooks with Nevermore Torres in the clouded lane as crime when both teams were busy trading baskets in the fourth period.

The only other time the country finish worse than seventh was in 2004, when it placed 11th.

The Philippines did not join the 2000, 2002 and 2006 editions of the second tournament. The Philippines has won the event six times, finished second twice and third thrice.

In the championship game, Iran reclaimed the crown it won in 2004 when the host country clobbered Kazakhstan, 95-55, while Syria completed the case of Asian teams to the Fiba World U19 Championships in New Zealand next year with a 93-86 win over Japan in the bronze-medal game. —Jane Bienvenu

The scores:

PHILIPPINES 74—De Guzman 16, Garcia 15, Wright 13, Mendoza 10, Torres 7, Sangalang 7, Cardona 6, Baclaan 4.

LEBANON 63—Andoni 19, Gill 19, Rouhana 10, Ghalaini 9, Jabara 6, Ismail 0, Nader 0, El-Kouzi 0, Elias 0, Kobaissi 0.

Quarters: 17-15, 40-28, 61-48, 74-63

Well done!

Kudos to the RP Youth Team for their excellent effort in representing our country in the 20th FIBA-Asia Basketball Tournament in Tehran, Iran!
Good job guys!

JOSHUA Wenk of La Salle crashes into Ateneo superstar Chris Yu. NOAH SORIANO

La Salle, FEU duel for No. 2 position

By Jasmine M. Payo

ATENEO PUNCTUATED A SENSATIONAL UAAP basketball elimination run by conquering again arch rival La Salle, 85-57, yesterday at the Araneta Coliseum.

The Blue Eagles led all the way mixing enough firepower and agility defense to spoil the Green Archers' bid for the second straight sudden death.

"Our defense really won the game for us, particularly in the second half," said coach Norman Black after the Eagles topped the elimination round with a 13-1 record.

The loss relegated the defending champion Archers to a do or die second game with the Ust Growers Tomorrow at 10:4 which they will break on Thursday.

The winner will get the No. 2 spot and the remaining twice-to-beat advantage when both teams clash anew in the Final Four.

Ateneo's Rabeh Al-Hussaini made another strong case for the MVP plum with 16 points and 11 rebounds, while Nonoy Baclao collected 11 markers, six boards and four blocks.

Top La Salle gunner JP Calma had an off game, finishing with only five points and as many turnovers after averaging 17.6 points in his last 13 outings.

A jeering crowd of 22,126 was recorded, with some reportedly paying as much as P7,000 for each patron ticket originally priced at P200.

Scalpers caught

During the game, the MR Special Task Force Unit apprehended 13 scalpers, including a university guard of a nearby establishment and a former policeman.

Overshadowed by the blockbuster match was the farewell game of outgoing Mvp Athletic Player Jerry Cruz, who openly wept at the banner after powering University of Santo Tomas to a 71-62 victory over the University of the Philippines in the first game.

Cruz hauled 21 points and hauled down 16 rebounds as the Tigers ended their heartbreaking run this season with a fifth loss 6-6 record.

The scores:

First Game

UST 71—Cruz 21, Alapag 10, Mercy 10, Mesa 8, Gonzalez 5, Cuan 5, Tayag 2, Cortez 2, Fernandez 0, Vargas 0, Arellano 0.

Second Game

UP 62—Aguilar 20, Parks 9, Asistio 8, Gonzalez 5, Sison 5, Lanete 4, Pogoy 2, Cardenas 2, Co 2, Pascual 2, Ramirez 0, Dela Merced 0, Mariano 0, Sangalang 0, Sumagaysay 0.

Quarters: 17-10, 32-28, 48-41, 71-62

Second Game

ATENEO 85—Al-Hussaini 16, Baclao 11, Reyes 10, Tiu 8, Villamor 7, Ildefonso 6, Arreglo 5, Elorde 5, Cuan 5, Buenafe 4, Jurado 4.

LA SALLE 57—Mallari 14, Mata 9, Cuevas 8, Ildefonso 7, Cani 5, Villanueva 4, Mangahas 4, Watkins 3, Arellano 03, Rivera 0, Bonifacio, Sagadraca 0.

Quarters: 21-12, 38-28, 64-41, 85-57

3rd PGMA Cup starts today, focus on So

THE EIGHTH CHESSE hopes to extend their chess dominance when the 3rd Perdalena Gloria Macapagal Arroyo Cup begins today at the Duty Free Fiesta Mall in Mandaue City.

Defending champion Grandmaster Li Chao and compatriot GM Zhang Pengxiang, winner of the first edition, will lead the Chinese contingent in the tournament that offers $6,000 to the champion.

Li and Zhang, however, are expected to encounter stiffer opposition this time with the presence of GMs Merlin Enriquiano (Elo 2662) of Kazakhstan, Zhang Zhong (Elo 2632) of Singapore and Surab Asabaliani (Elo 2613) and Mikheil Mchedlishvili (Elo 2606) of Georgia.

Yaya, there's Filipino sensation Wesley So.

The 14-year-old So, the country's highest-rated player ever with an Elo of 2624, will spearhead the local challenge in the nine-round event organized by the National Chess Federation of the Philippines.

This will be So's first local appearance since returning from a successful foreign campaign. He landed ninth in the World Junior Championships, emerged board one gold medalist in the World Under-16 Olympiad, both held in Turkey, and placed third in the first Dragon Capital-Ateneum Open last month.

Other Filipino contenders are GMs Eugene Torre, Mark Paragua, Rong Villamayor, Joey Antonio, Darwin Laylo and Jayson Gonzales.

The event is a brainchild of NCFP president Prospero "Butch" Pichay and supported by Duty Free Philippines, Inc. (network of Fiesta, Filipinas Mall, Cebu and Dipolog).

Opening ceremonies will be at 9 a.m. with Pichay, NCFP secretary general Tagaytay City Mayor Abraham "Bambol" Tolentino and Duty Free general manager Michael Christian Elio in attendance. —Ray Lauzon

Beating Iran no big thing

WITH THE UPCOMING FIBA-Asia Men's Championship in China next year, Wanchai-to-Fame Pinoy expat Ben Howe wanted to know if the SBP has plans of monitoring a naturalized player, much in the same vein of our Asian neighbors have.

IN HUDDLE

Beth Celis

"We (and at least a 6-11 center ala Wael of Lebanon to back us up," he wrote, suggesting that the SBP start looking around for tall talents as soon as possible or conduct camps to identify them.

"Also, it would be interesting if the SBP can have training centers in the United States and Canada as we can develop Pinoys or anyone with Pinoy blood ourselves. This way we won't need agents to peddle these talents to us," Howe said.

* * *

Speaking of the SBP, it came as a big consolation to former executive director Pato Gregorio that the Philippines won over Iran in the Fiba-Asia youth championship still ongoing in Iran. Even if it was a one-hearing game.

The knell to ath development program was a brainchild of Pato backed by Tim Cone's admiration.

Pato noted that Iran is the defending champion of the event and winning against the squad showed that, if not for bad breaks, Ivano Pamazzani's boys could have wrestled to contention.

"Now all we need is to beat China for the chance to land in fifth place," he said of the knotted contention of the pros during the Fiba Press Corps Awards Night at the Bayview Hotel in Manila last Tuesday.

Pato must have been terribly disappointed to read a press statement from the Iranian coach the following day saying that, since it was a no-hearing game, he had finished his last scouted troopers to preserve his stars for the more important games ahead. The Iranian coach stressed that he had benched his most prolific cager.

Pato must have been even more flabbergasted to read yesterday's news from Iran. He lost by 22 points to the powerful squad in the Quadrilateral round and blew our chance for a fifth place finish.

* * *

As I presented hoping half Ben-Hurning of Glenn Murphy, I knelt down about the boxing experts, all of them affiliated with broadcast and print media, to find out their opinion regarding the forthcoming Manny Pacquiao-Oscar De La Hoya fight in Las Vegas.

"Fighters are going crazy about the fight. Is it an even match?" Boo wanted to know. "De La Hoya has fought on a smallweight, Pacquiao on a flyweight. De La Hoya is much taller and has a longer reach. Is this fight still about money or is it a fight for the ages?"

Actually I never got to all of the five experts in my list.

The first respondent refused to talk at first.

He said the Inquirer scribes will be all over his throat if he revealed his thoughts.

"These guys are very ferocious. They are like sharks. They can't even accept anything until against their will. And that includes the media," The respondent said.

I promised not to mention his name.

* * *

"I don't see how Pacquiao can win over De La Hoya. He is far too big and too quick. He has range reach, is an excellent body jab and left hook and he is a good boxer like Juan Manuel Marquez, with whom Manny had such a difficult time."

I reminded my fellow columnist of De La Hoya's spar-mate from "The Iron Boy" Calderon, a former world light flyweight champ who always gave the Golden Boy a very difficult time. Calderon, only 5-foot-3 and weighs 108 lbs, said De la Boya's antidotes are small and speedy boxers.

$3-M penalty also applies for Pacman vs Hoya

By Marc Anthony Reyes

MANNY PACQUIAO, 27 TURNED out, should also be watching his weight like Oscar De La Hoya.

As stipulated in the Dec. 6 fight contract that was signed over the weekend, Pacquiao is also required to pay $3 million per excess pound of the 147 lbs ring-weight, the same penalty he had earlier sought against his rather bigger and richer opponent.

"It also applies to Manny. Inc. there's no worry," Pacquiao's lawyer Franklin Gacal told the Inquirer.

"Once just wants it to apply to both of them," added Gacal, who also hinted that they both agreed in the ring-before-the-fight weigh in.

De La Hoya was quoted by Fightnews.com recently as saying, "Make that $5 million, because it's never going to happen. I can make 140 lbs., 144 lbs is my natural weight."

However, De La Hoya has fought as high as 160 lbs and last entered the ring (against Steve Forbes last May) at 154 lbs. He won by decision but suffered cuts and bruises in his face.

Pacquiao, on the other hand, had difficulty making the 135 lbs lightweight limit against David Diaz last June, scrambling in his frantic manner Freddie Roach.

But there could be danger when he puts on additional weight as he usually ballooms to 155 lbs when not in training.

He reports his ring City 1 to time for the six-city promotional tour of their scrapfight at the MGM Grand in Las Vegas.

Meanwhile, De La Hoya said it's definite that Floyd Mayweather Jr. will be by the side on fight night.

That despite the heavy schedule of Mayweather, who has also agreed to prepare British star Ricky Hatton for his fight against Pedro Mellgarejo in November.

Hatton, who suffered his first and only loss to Floyd Mayweather Jr. last year, is fighting under De La Hoya's Golden Boy Promotions.

MANNY Pacquiao can't afford to go over 147 lbs.

GOOD LUCK. PBA-bound players who saw action for Harbour Centre in the PBL with Harbour Centre owner Mikee Romero (2nd from left) during a farewell party he rendered at Kanagan Bike. From left, front row, are Ty Tang, Jonathan Fernandez, Romero, Tigdig City Mayor Freddie Tinga, team manager Erick Arrieta, PBL Executive Director Butch Maniego. At the back (from left) are Kelvin Espiritu, Chad Alonzo, Rob Reyes, Beau Belga, Gabe Norwood, Jeff Chan and Sol Mercado.

Masters Poker up

A JOKER PLAYMILLION 2007 IS up for grabs in the Las Manores Poker Club Cup, set Sept. 13-14 on Remedios Circle corner Jorge Bocobo Street in Malate, Manila.

Players from the United States, Europe, Australia, Korea, Japan, Hong Kong and seven guests of Asia are expected to arrive this week to test their mettle against top local bets.

Local and foreign players have qualified to join the riches poker tournament this year after emerging champions from the daily tournaments held at the Masters Poker Club. Entry fee is P50,000 for those who failed the daily qualifiers.

For inquiries, call (632)2367215-94, (632)2999888,88 or e-mail www.mastersjoker.ph.

Meanwhile, Asia Pacific Poker director president Jeffrey Hunter said that the APPT will be holding its 4th leg in Manila on Sept. 11 to 14 at the Wynn Hotel and Casino, where the 11 PE-spins players, who failed to advance to the Poker Stars our Asia Pacific Poker Tour 2008, held in Macau will have a chance to bounce back.

SPORTSWATCH

B6FBL preseason tourney set Sept. 27

EVIGHT teams in SET FOR THE ENGINE of the preseason tournament of the newly organized Bistro 9-Foot Basketball League (B6FBL) Commissioner Mike E. Fernandez announced yesterday.

Fernandez said at least 12 teams have already confirmed participation in the tournament set on Sept. 27 and designed to accommodate the majority of Filipino basketball players.

"This is all new and historic also in the tournament since they have equal chances of winning," said Fernandez.

Fernandez said the B6FBL is not going to compete with the professional or amateur league like PBA and PBL since current players from both leagues are not allowed to join the new tournament.

But he said pro players who have not seen action in the PBA or the local circuit years will be allowed to play.

Kobe, KG items big hit

BASKETBALL SUPERSTARS KOBE BRYANT and Kevin Garnett remain to be the top sales attractions for the National Basketball Association.

With the 2008-09 season kicking off late next month, Bryant and Garnett continue to be the leading sellers of NBA jerseys and basketballs.

The popularity of the two cagers is the greater heights after figuring in the NBA Finals last June, which Garnett's and the Boston Celtics won in six games.

Product Sports Center, the exclusive retailer of uncirculated items of official NBA products in the country including playing jerseys and Spalding basketballs, said Bryant and Garnett items are currently the store's best sellers.

Jao, Buncio sparkle

BUNCIO

THE RIVALRY BETween reigning titlist Mister Buncio of Sunrise Eli 956 Racing and former champ John Jao of Shell Advance from Iloilo City took center stage in the Super Class encounter in the fourth leg of the 2008 Shell Advance Superbikes Series at the Subic Racing Circuit.

Jao, a 16-time champion, snatched his first win this season after burning back Buncio in Race 7 of this series sanctioned by the National Motorcycle Sports and Safety Association.

Showing no signs of rust, Jao quickly grabbed the lead and dared several times with Buncio in the 16-lap race where he clocked 17 minutes and 7.615 seconds, just 0.135 seconds ahead of Buncio.

Buncio, who secured the crown from Jao last year, redeemed himself in Race 8 by taking the headstart, gaining distance every lap before stepping up his speed in the 11th minute and 6.169 seconds ahead of Jao.

The victory foiled Buncio's total in 172, Jao three points behind pacesetting Jao (171) going to the last race legs.

Race 1—(2)(3)—Ng, Ng Sing, Jr. (1), Ng Sing, Sr. (2), Jao, Jao, Jr. (3), Jao, Jao, Sr. (4), Jao, Jao, Jr. (5), Jao, Jao, Sr. (6), Jao, Jao, Jr. (7), Jao, Jao, Sr. (8), Jao, Jao, Jr. (9), Jao, Jao, Sr. (10), Jao, Jao, Jr. (11), Jao, Jao, Sr.

NCAA: Fiba rule to decide 'Final 5'

By Cedelf F. Tejan

HEIGHT AS WELL CALL IT THE Final Five.

The NCAA will use the Fiba classification point system to settle one of the tightest Final Four races in league history.

San Beda and Letran could end up tied for the No. 3 slot but there is also the possibility of having four teams ending up deadlocked for the last three slots with similar 9-5 records.

The Lions could wrap up the top spot and the twice-to-beat incentive that goes with it if they win on Wednesday against the Knights, who could drop into a four-way tie with San Sebastian, Mapua and Jose Rizal.

In this case, San Sebastian will play Jose Rizal and Mapua will battle Letran with the winners playing off for the No. 3 seed and the twice-to-beat edge and the loser automatically clinching the third seed.

The losing teams will also play in another knockout match to determine the No. 4 team.

If the Knights prevail, they will play San Beda again in a playoff for the top spot, leaving SSC, Mapua and JRU to fight for the two remaining spots.

In case of a three-way tie at 9-5, Mapua and JRU will square off in a do-or-die match with the winners facing San Sebastian for the No. 3 seed.

It's Serena vs Jelena

Williams, Jankovic dispute US Open crown

NEW YORK—JELENA JANKOVIC MADE IT to her first grand-slam final and Serena Williams ended the five-year drought of American women in the US Open decider as they won their semifinals to straight sets Friday.

Both seeded Russian opponents, Andrevic beat Elena Dementieva, 6-4, 6-4, while Williams downed Dinara Safina, 6-3, 6-2.

It will be Williams' 12th Grand Slam final, and Jankovic's first, and in addition to the all-star trophy at stake, the winner will rise to No. 1 in the rankings next week.

"Overall, she's the strongest player on the tour, together with her sister," said the second-seeded Jankovic. "Nobody has the powers that they have, 9th current computer."

The final is scheduled for Saturday night, but forecasts of rain prompted tournament organizers to announce contingency plans that could include postponing the match until Sunday.

"I'm ready to play tomorrow. I hopefully am one," Williams said. "If not, I'll be ready for Sunday. Monday, Tuesday—doesn't matter."

It will be Williams' first appearance in a US Open final since she won it in 2002, and to-

JANKOVIC

WILLIAMS

Americans had made it since. It is also nine years since her first final in Flushing Meadow, which she won on 17-year-old.

"I bet (an extra) is still be here," Williams said, "and, 28 years later, still putting up a respectable fight."

She got off to a shaky start against Safina, broken in her first service game. Williams fell behind 2-0, but won seven of the next eight games, eventually doing a totally better job than Safina of dealing with a gusty wind.

Safina wound up with 41 unforced errors, and repeatedly rolled her eyes, shook her head or shouted at herself in English or Russian, much the way her brother and former US Open champion Marat Safin does. After hitting her fifth double-fault of the match she yelled, "I hate the wind!" Two points after that, Safina pushed a backhand long and Williams broke to lead 2-1 in the second set.

"I was behaving like a really spoiled girl," Safina said.

The whipping air played havoc with serve rooms—the women combined for 11 double-faults—and all manner of other strokes. The 18-flag at one end of Arthur Ashe Stadium ripped so loudly that Safina turned to glare at it before one serve.

Safina didn't go quietly, breaking at love to tie the second set 1-1. It was in the next game, that Williams changed into a drop shot and hit a groundstroke straight into the Russian.

Safina said that upset her, but she also acknowledged, "It's all in the mind. I can only be angry with myself for hitting a bad drop shot."

When they spoke after the match, Williams said: "I didn't miss it, OK?"

"I was, you know, nearly unsettled that I lost," Williams said later. AP

Cojuangco wooing old supporters

By Marc Anthony Reyes

PHILIPPINE OLYMPIC COMMITtee president Peping Cojuangco is set to announce next week his lineup for the Nov. 16 POC elections with both his reported ouster, incumbent chair Robert Aventajado and vice president Monico Puentevella, possibly running under his ticket.

Cojuangco and those are still deliberations going on regarding the composition of his ticket in a reelection bid he hopes would keep him in office until the 2012 London Olympics.

His spokesman Joey Romasanta said Cojuangco is still talking to Puentevella (weightlifting) and Aventajado (badminton), who have both declared their intention to run against the reported star president.

Also reported to be running is former POC president Celso Dayrit (fencing) who has reportedly made a coalition with presidential brother Art Macapagal (shooting).

"It's just going to be 40 people [one vote/it from the National Sports Association] voting," said Romasanta. "It's not like it's a national election."

Sources said Cojuangco is expected to get the support of track and field boss Go Teng Kok, who has his own loyal group of NSAs backing him.

Go was recently tasked to head the SP delegation that will attend the 2009 Southeast Asian Games federation meeting in Laos over the weekend.

ACES HIGH: In this photo released by the Nationwide Tour, from left, golfers Brian Stuard, Jonathan Kaye, Peter Tomasulo and Dirk Kinard each raise a golf ball in the air on Thursday at Willow Creek Country Club in Sandy, Utah. The four golfers each scored a hole-in-one Friday in the second round of the Utah Championship golf tournament.

One-week Tour eyed

By Jose Navarro

ECSTATIC OVER THE TURNOUT of the one-day Manila to Baguio race last summer, Liquigas Philippines team wanted to try its hand on a week-long cycling Tour to be held closely next year.

Officials of Liquigas, which owns a professional cycling team in the Tour de France, yesterday announced a series of qualifying races for the seven-day multi-stage Sibanlom beginning early on an 89-kilometer circuit on Sept. 13 on Macapagal Highway in Batangas City.

Liquigas will team up with the Liquified Petroleum Gas Manufacturers Association in evolving the Tour after it was established this year due to financial difficulties.

After the initial qualifying for the eldest-ever week, LPGMA president Arnel Ty said the cyclists would still get a chance to improve their clubbing in a pair of named stage races in Tagaytay City to be held in November and December.

Ty said the top 100 riders from the three qualifying races would be assured of spots in the Tour proper tentatively scheduled on the last week of March.

"We want to help these riders stay competitive so we decided to bring back the Tour," said Ty. Irish Valenzuela won the Manila-Baguio race put up by Liquigas-LPGMA four months ago.

ONCE AGAIN.

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No matter how many times it happens, it'll always be an honor for us to be named the most read newspaper in the country. According to the Nielsen Media Index 2008 Q2 Study, the Philippine Daily Inquirer has garnered the highest percentage of readers nationwide. A big thank you to our readers, advertisers and partners for all the support!

INQUI
here to ask. Be as

Sunday BIZ

"THE FUTURE of pharmaceuticals is in biotech, not chemical," says the British CEO.

Once upon a time top CEO could only afford 'espasol' for lunch

By Stephanie Dyotic
Cover Story

THE PHILIPPINES SCORED zero on the medal tally in Beijing, but there is one Olympic title it can claim for itself—guardian of the bellies of the world's greatest athletes.

It has intensely been with due thus (head of a spokesman's dream of victory at the 2008 Olympics, it was thanks to an oral vaccine for rhodens made by a Filipino pharmacist, Carlos "Tito" Ignacio, president and CEO of United Laboratories (Unilab), gives the inside scoop: "In the last Olympics, Dr. had a marathon runner whose they thought would win the gold medal. But he got diarrhea. Details. So, this time, all of China's athletes took this vaccine so they don't get diarrhea or cholera. And because you cannot have a cholera epidemic during the Olympics, all the food handlers in all the restaurants of Beijing had to take the vaccine. We supplied it."

EJERCITO grew up in a shanty in front of the Cuartel High School.

This Olympic export is but the latest in the meteoric history of Unilab, a company that has been around for so long and has grown so large, most people forget it is a homegrown business that began as a corner drugstore in Binondo just after World War II.

From Binondo to Beijing

The late founder Jose Y. Campos first started making his own products in the 1950's with the vitamin Tiki-Tiki. It was called "United American Tiki-Tiki" to ride on people's patriotism soaring for all things American. Today, even without the "United American" tag, Tiki-Tiki remains one of the strongest vitamin brands in the Philippines.

If Campos was the driver of the child's fever relating to manufacturing, Dr. Ignacio is the force behind Unilab's expansion to complex prescription drugs and overseas markets—a move that quintupled the company's business in the last ten years. Ignacio is one of the 50 Filipino CEOs featured in the book "Extraordinary Stories for Inspiring Leaders" published by the Management Association of the Philippines.

He recounts the circumstances that led him to change the path Unilab was on. "It all about ten years ago. If you looked at the product portfolio of Unilab, we were very strong in over-the-counter drugs, but we were not very strong in prescription [pharmaceuticals]."

(CONTINUED ON B2)

CAESAR Dy-Quiroz

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Sun-isang lang yan!

Nuns' business is of, by and for women

By Nina Catherine Calleja
Inquirer Southern Luzon

BOHOL, CAVITE—THE TOWN, known for the Carlos Espace Peñarubia Jesus (CEPJ), hosts more than 200 factories generating employment for residents of Cavite and nearby provinces.

Despite the seeming stiff competition, however, it is a challenge for nuns to start a business, according to Sr. Estela Gamot, one of the nuns who founded in this town the Talleres de Nazaret, a firm producing seafood-based products and employing women workers.

The nuns of Hermas de San Jose congregation were not allowed even if were to those days harvesters.

At present, Hermas is also in the cities of Muntinlupa, Quezon, Cebu, Silay and Tagaytay.

Now employing 13 women workers, Talleres aims to offer an alternative capital labor relationship which, Gamot said, reflect the welfare of the workers more than profit.

"At the era of globalization, we would like to offer: bringing back the dignity of women workers, fair trade, an environment conducive to work and growth," Gamot explained.

She also mentioned a "christian-like" initiative," emphasizing the spiritual formation of the members.

Since the start of their project in 2006, snails, groceries and pandesiong centers in Cavite, Laguna and Metro Manila have been gradually picking Talleres' products such as pickled "kropp tahong," squid rings and squid hearts.

Refuge

During the lunchtime visit, the women workers of Talleres were chatting with each other while working. The radio was on too, with pop music playing.

The workplace for Talleres is her old house from the second one in the Bohol area, according to its owners.

And, their "homes," the nuns, were helping them in cleaning, cooking and packing the squids and tahong (mussels).

Aurora Aglian, 58, working with Talleres for two years now, is enjoying her work.

Before finding Gamot and her fellow nuns, Sr. Judy Sirgala and Sr. Anita Bago, Aglian had been hopping from one factory to another every three or six months.

"Sometimes I could not withstand the treatment of my employers, and often, they terminated me for no good reason after three or six months," Aglian says in Filipino.

So when she learned about the Talleres, she personally submitted her application and was accepted.

Aglian said she was glad that she now accepted her chapter for being a lesbian.

"Many companies don't accept lesbians," she says.

Certainly, Talleres needs orders to operate. She had worked with Aglian before, "to offer factories, there is no time for rest. Your wage is sometimes less than what was agreed upon. The boss shouts at you when you commit a mistake."

Worse, Aglian experienced being terminated because of a slight error in her job.

"Here, you don't have bosses. The work is light because no one is watching your every move," she says.

Eva Tadeda, 27, says she gained self-confidence working in Talleres.

"The nuns treat you, and they treat us not as employees but as family members," she says.

In working for Talleres, Tadeda realized that she has potentials and is capable of accomplishing tasks.

"Here what is more important is the laborers, not the money," she adds.

Gamot says increase in profit should also mean increase in the wage and benefits of the workers.

THE PRODUCTS of Talleres de Nazaret such as Kropp Tahong, Squid Rings and Squid Heads sold at P25-P40 for 20 grams.

HOT YOUR most workplace. This was how workers of Talleres de Nazaret described their working condition in the cargo-managed seafood business.

(From left) Sr. ERLINDA Gamot, SSJ, Sr. Anita Bago, SSJ, and Sr. Judy Vergara, SSJ.

THE NEW workplace of Talleres de Nazaret, painted with vibrant colors to create a conducive working environment.

For women

Talleres began in Quiapo, Manila in 1986 in response to the growing number of unemployed and exploited women.

Sisters de San Jose then targeted poor female students so they would earn for their schooling and allowances.

Afterward, Talleres started to reach out to unemployed women and out-of-school girls by training them to cook and make school uniforms.

Gamot says they launched out in various cities, recruiting poor young women and tapping the resources most available in the area.

In July 2008, Gamot and her colleagues got P120,000 initial capital from their congregation's Mother Ignacia Rodriguez Foundation.

They bought deep fryer and vacuum fryer and started to employ two workers.

"We made squid rings," she says. Gamot learned to cook squid rings when she was assigned in Iloilo.

The product clicked among their friends, then, their customers.

Then, they also made fried squid heads and stomach, a known product of Cavite.

Their products improved when the Department of Science and Technology taught them the proper processing and packaging of the squids and mussels.

After some months, with new machines, they began hiring more workers.

Monthly, Talleres is able to produce 4,000 packs of kropp tahong, 4,000 packs of squid rings and 1,200 packs of squid hearts.

It also promotes its products to retailers here in Manila.

Gamot says the people believe in their products not only because these are healthy and delicious but also because of the workers' intention.

In the products' label is a slogan that reads "products of harmonized prayer and work."

Gamot and her staff know that expansion of the business would mean their capacity to employ more people.

"As of now, there are so many unemployed applicants, but we can't hire all of them," she says.

But hopefully, she adds, if their applications for a Bureau of Food and Drugs license is approved, then production will increase.

And, from their current workplace measuring 30 square meters, soon the employees will transfer to a 150-square-meter building.

Why the need to protect your brand

ANYBODY CAN TAKE UP ADVENTURE sports, but it requires specialized gears to do such challenging or rappelling.

Joey Casuela has been involved in outdoor activities since 1985. His interests in rock climbing and surfing inspired him to create Mojo sandals.

Mojo is specialized outdoor footwear created and designed by Casuela in 1991. The footwear is recommended for long hours of trekking and other types of outdoor activities. Casuela started out canvassing for materials and commissioning shoemakers in Marikina to make a pair of sandals that he designed himself.

Believing that Mojo would be a profitable brand, Casuela took the initiative to register Mojo as a trademark. In the past, he personally intervened to go after counterfeiters who tried to pass off their footwear as Mojos.

With the help of express consultant property, Casuela needed to ensure that his brand is protected. "The brand is both a symbol of market dominance and a guarantee of quality. So it should follow that a brand is an asset every business should actively take steps to protect," says Anthony Bengzon, senior partner at Bengzon Negre Untalan (BNU) Intellectual Property Attorneys, Casuela's counsel and attorney in fact.

Casuela lauds the help of the intellectual property experts saying, "It really shows the protection you need, you're bound to make lesser mistakes."

Indeed that is the case with Mojo. Despite the entrance of foreign brands and local competitors, Mojo continues to appeal to the outdoorsy Pinoy. Casuela credits this to the goodwill and trust that the Mojo brand has achieved.

"Filipinos are brand-conscious," says Casuela. "They perceive brands as marks of quality. In Mojo's case, users see the brand as practical and comfortable."

As Mojo is nearing its 20th year, Casuela has every intention on continuing the promise of the Mojo brand: comfort, convenience, and affordability.

Today, Mojos are available in various sports stores and gyms. In 17 years, Mojo has come a long way from being sold via Casuela's rock-climbing buddies, to becoming a trusted brand.

MOJO footwear

Once upon a time top CEO could only afford 'espasol' for lunch

From page B1

When Ejercito became President of the company in 1999, he had to convince the board members so Unilab would have products to sell. "It was so difficult. They hate unfashionable. We needed to expand our capability to R&D (research and development), so we could produce our own prescription medicines."

When an executive from a multinational pharma told him they did not consider Unilab a serious competitor, Ejercito decided it was time to make the move. "The total business then was only P6 billion. This year, we are breaking P30 billion."

Unilab has also established profitable operations in other Southeast Asian countries, China, and India. It has become, as Ejercito puts it, a multinational in its own right. "There is no other pharma company in the world in a low-income area like one company has 28 percent market share, and we have to have," he says of Unilab's standing in the Philippines.

(R) is the sixth of 13 children; some of the first older siblings finished college.

Unilab's rise from corner drugstore to major Asian player is extraordinary and Ejercito's personal success story is no less exceptional.

Self-made man

The 63-year-old CEO was born to very poor parents in Cavite, the sixth of 13 children. None of his first older siblings finished college. "I was four years old when I was in grade one," recalls Ejercito. "I was so young very skinny. Because [up] to my 10 years old, I was in high school, then at fourteen, I started college at the University of the East.

"One house was a small dentistry in front of Cavite High School. I had to earn my allowance for the day. I would go to the market, buy noodles for pancit, for baka-baka, then cook it. I'd open my thirteen, and three students would come. I would get about 90 centavos. Seventy centavos would go to ingredients. I'd have 20 centavos left for a bottle of Coke and espasol. That was my lunch, my breakfast—repeated. That's why now, when my wife brings home espasol, I don't want to see espasol!" Ejercito laughs.

By age 18, Ejercito graduated cum laude with a degree in accountancy. His first job was in insurance as a small clerk. "I earned P3 per day for half a day's work. I hated two weeks. I was making more money in my small dukhan in the province."

He then joined the accounting department of Procter & Gamble. "I was there for about one and a half years, then I decided accounting wasn't really the work I liked. By then, IBM was opening. I joined as a systems engineer."

After five years, he decided to move again. "I was becoming very motivated. I was the industry specialist for banking, constructing those branches to the head office computers. And so, being a specialist is the longest route to the top. So, I moved to Citibank. It was my account officer, Kimba nemet ako," he laughs. "I stayed there seven years."

Ejercito rose all the way to country operations head of Citibank in the Philippines. Not for that, there was nowhere else to go except a foreign assignment. He was offered various positions in Hong Kong, Japan, Singapore and New York, but his children's flat refusal to move kept him in the country. He joined Unilab instead.

Ten years and many successes later, he still daydreams about future healthcare projects. "I want to put up a manufacturing plant to produce oncology or cancer products. Ung mga chemotherapy. Right now, we are importing that as finished product, and we're having difficulty with sourcing. I also want to get into vaccines. Most countries would want to have their own vaccines, be security from countries like Vietnam have their own vaccine plants."

The biggest field is one area Unilab has its eyes on. "The future of pharmaceuticals is in biotech, not chemical," says Ejercito.

"The products you see now are all chemical-based. Biotech is cutting-edge works on the cellular level, on the genes, the DNA. We're ventured into that. We set up a plant in China and it's a profitable business. We produce two products. One of them is the human growth hormone, which is used for children of short stature."

The other product is the oral vaccine for cholera used by athletes and food handlers in the Beijing Olympics.

After more than 40 years managing various companies, Ejercito claims that one of the failure in leadership is the book "Extraordinary Stories for Aspiring Leaders"—10 developing a superstar complex; 2) not being able to gain people's buy-in for a decision, then taking rank to own it down; and 3) not knowing how to manage down.

"The companies that stay very long, that live very long, are those that are aligned with society," he remarks. "Their very existence is in the interest of society. We are here to stay for a very, very long time. It's important that we work with the needs of society so hope and try we will appreciate us, and that will improve the chances that our company will survive for many generations."

(More advice from Ejercito and other Filipino CEOs in "Extraordinary Stories for Aspiring Leaders" available at National Bookstore and Powerbooks outlets.)

Using chicken feathers to build homes

By Kenneth M. del Rosario

MISAMIS ACEA, A TEACHER of wood science and wood properties at the UP Los Baños College of Forestry and Natural Resources, has been working on his project, "Recycling Waste Chicken Feathers for Low Cost Building Material," for more than nine months now.

The project aims to utilize tons of chicken feathers to develop low-cost, lightweight, and durable polymer composites used as building material for houses and construction.

Acda's project is a two-time winner in the eight year old Ford Conservation and Environmental Grants Program (Ford Evergreen) which supports innovative sustainable solutions that foster environmental impacts. Ford has provided some P1.8 million in funding assistance to 52 projects.

Ford Motor Philippines president Richard Baker, recently visited Acda's operations as a way of getting to know the projects being supported by the program.

According to Acda, the country produces 48 million chicken a year. Six percent of the chicken's weight, he said, is feather. These feathers are either burned in landfills or are left to rot. In short, the chicken's feathers account for a big amount of waste.

"Chicken feathers are the waste products of the poultry industry," said Acda. "The millions of kilos of waste feathers generated by commercial poultry processing plants results in not only solid waste problem."

He said there have been several attempts to solve the waste problem of chicken feathers, elsewhere, particularly commercial applications which utilize them in packaging and combining fiber, fillers and masterbatch.

However, they require only a few minutes, barely reducing the amount of waste chicken feathers generated.

Acda demonstrated for Baker how the chicken feathers are mixed with cement to produce a material that is suitable for construction materials such as insulation or roofing.

Though he and his team still needs another 6 to 12 months before they determine the best formulation of feathers and cement, Acda said that no less 80 percent cement and 20 percent feather is the best mixture.

"You'll never know the panels have been mixed with feathers," said Acda. "It virtually has no smell and there have been so far no reports of any allergic reactions with the use of chicken feathers."

The professor said he needs more tests to make commercially viable the construction materials made from recycled chicken feathers.

"Ford is proud to be involved in such an exciting and ecologically relevant project. Our support for this resilience initiative senses our commitment to finding sustainable solutions in preserving and maintaining our environment," Baker said.

The initiative earned praises of Acda that received support from Ford Evergreen. In 2006, Acda was a recipient for his project, "Value Barrier for Termite Control," in which he built a house right behind his office that sits on a 9-inch layer of lyber.

He said the lyber, which came from the UPLB Mt. Pinatubo ecopark, is a natural barrier from termites. So far, in its evaluation phase, the project is proving to be a success as there has been no sight of any termite inside the house for over two years now.

Since its inception, Ford Evergreen have partnered with various groups and organizations with different missions such as the Bayan Bayanan.

Together, they had established a scientific garden in the La Mesa biodiversity and nature park in 2003; had planted indigenous plants in the La Mesa Watershed in 2006; and had built the Ford Arboretum of Philippine Endangered and Unique Tree Species at the La Mesa Nature Reserve in 2007.

Pearl has also supported the Center for Environmental Awareness and Education for its Project Learning Tree from 2001 to 2003, and the Mountain Film Festival from 2004 to 2006.

For their end, Baker said they will continue to maintain the use of recyclable materials in manufacturing their cars, adding that 85 percent of materials used in their cars is recyclable. Baker said that the company would double the production of their hybrid cars next year.

In 2007, Ford extended a collaborations in four corners: Ilona Gladys Orange Center Mesilla Observatory for their "Islands in LoCOS," a call for a "low-carbon diet" and healthy lifestyle; and Clean and Green Francis.

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FORD president Rich Baker with Fernando Acda

Features in Brief

Davao farm trains coffee farmers

AS MAKERS OF THE COFFEE BRAND NESCAFÉ, NESTLÉ MAKES SURE THAT LOCAL COFFEE farmers are armed with the best knowledge available when it comes to coffee.

Quality products, after all, can only be as good as the raw materials they are made of. The Nestlé Experimental and Demonstration Farm (NEDF) in Tagum, Davao del Sur, provides technologically advanced farming tools and methods to coffee farmers to ensure that only the high quality coffee beans goes into every cup of Nescafé.

The NEDF operates based on five main objectives: expose its knowhow to the best coffee farming technology from Nestlé; provide a venue for the training of these farmers on the proper technologies of coffee production; propagate good coffee planting materials for distribution to farmers; and share viable farming techniques to increase productivity while lowering production cost.

After these aims has been conducted by the company's R&D Center in Tours, France. Nestlé operates the results to its demo farm for experimentation for local feasibility and practicality work.

The NEDF then develops appropriate coffee farming technologies which are then disseminated to coffee farmers, managers of coffee plantations and even students through various continuity coupled out training programs.

Realizing that education is a powerful tool in technology transfer, Nestlé has drawn up three regular training programs designed for specific purposes and these kinds of trainees:

1.) Farmers coffee production technology training;
2.) Coffee specialist training program;
3.) On-the-job training that focuses on the complete technology of coffee growing, from the origin of coffee, it's botany, adaptability, elevation, soil and water requirement, nutrition harvesting up to post-harvest techniques and mainly the production of the green coffee beans.

Sentricon now in Negros Occidental

SENTRICON® TERMITE COLONY ELIMINATION SYSTEM HAS RECENTLY MADE AVAILABLE in Negros Occidental through authorized operator Laguna Pest Inspection Agro Chemical and Pest Control Services Inc., locally known as "LPI Pest Masters."

According to LPI Pest Masters president Victor E. Lo Henares Jr., Negros Occidental is an area of about 19,461 percent agricultural land that makes it prone to termite infestation. The company, operating in Bacolod City and in Negros Occidental for the last six years, was authorized by ALDG & Co. to carry out termite treatments using Sentricon® Termite Colony Elimination System, a baiting technology that protects world-famous sites and many homes and properties around the world.

"We chose ES Pest Masters to handle Bacolod and the entire Negros Occidental because we saw in them the same high level of commitment that we have, love service business such as this, see critical success factor to the delivery of guaranteed commitment and I am very happy that V3 is consistently demonstrating that they are more than able," Sihayan observed.

Sihayan reveals, "I remember we released it we did many years ago where we found out that of the total properties we inspected, about 80 percent were infested. We later learned that the property owners did not employ preventive termite control."

"This, she says, validates the notion that Filipinos are "reactive" or "curative" rather than "preventive," although she is quick to add "that having been in this business for a long time, I am also seeing that this is slowly evolving. Maybe because there are more educated consumers, hence the need for protection is also growing and gaining ladies all the time."

Wedding expo set

WEDDING EXPO PHILIPPINES WILL PRESENT THE LATEST TRENDS AND SERVICES IN Springtime Inn on Sept. 6-7, 2008 at The PICC Forum, CCP Complex.

Wedding Expo brings together some 300 booths to weddings in a 5,000-sq.m. wedding wonderland for a two-day display of wedding themes. Free admission will be extended to pre-registered visitors on www.theweddingexpo.com.

Some 50 world-class stylists will be the celebrities' event stylists to showcase various styles and techniques in floral art and ambiance architecture in three respective booths.

Soon-to-wed will also get the chance to meet photographers in Kanalitsik, as the photographers and videographers' zone is called.

Grand food tasting provides generous food samples for those who will inquire about wedding packages.

Fashion designers, limousine providers, invitation makers, giveaway suppliers, hotels, venues, and everyone else involved in making dream weddings a reality will be on hand for consultations. Tokens, discounts, premiums and other decent samples are available for you-know-willing to try them out. Everyone is advised to get ready for a fun and stress-filled weekend.

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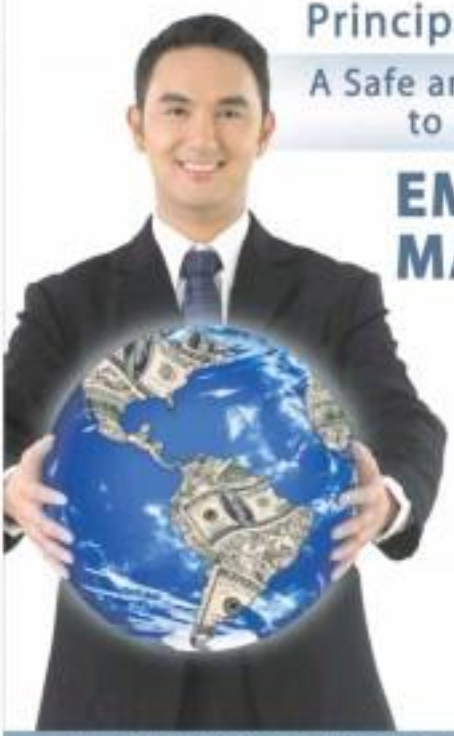

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Sunday LIFESTYLE
Lifestyle Section Sun Star Cebu

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- **Vote Tubbataha** for 7 wonders of nature /F1

GARDEN of Claude Monet in Giverny, France

Vicki-Hayden romance going pffft?

IN THE HIGH-PROFILE Leap December affair of beauty queen Vicki Belo and young doctor/budding actor Hayden Kho coming to an end?

That's the lead buzz this week, as Belo left for Paris Friday—alone.

Kho is staying behind, on the threshold of shots like others often must him.

Sunshine done in the couple say Belo, easily one of the country's most accomplished women and teler's 23 years older than Kho, is said to be trying hard to cope with the myriad neuroses of her young paramour. She won't need to be tolerated, for instance, his basketball like he is, but just couldn't keep up.

How much should they "control" each other's life seems to be the present issue, the insiders say.

Actually, it's not unlike issues many ordinary couples grapple with. But—given how she's helped shape the lifestyles of many women, and how she's marketed herself—the three-year-old romance has been

VICKI-14

CELEBRATE GRANDPARENTS' DAY AT SM SUPERMALLS!

Treat Lolo and Lola to a day of fun and excitement. Start off with lunch or merienda at one of the many dining options at SM Supermalls and enjoy special events lovingly dedicated to grandparents.

Watch celebrity performers like Claire Dela Fuente, Gabby Concepcion, Sesa Yuriga, Ice Crayon, The New Madrigals, Bl[illegible] Inclusive, The Angeles and [illegible] Ms. Pilita Corales as they serenade your grandparents.

Why not watch Lolo and Lola show off their dancing skills in the free Ballroom Dancing Workshop on Sept. 7 and 8 at [illegible] SM City Taytay? Then join them for a dance or two at the Grand Ballroom Night on Sept. 6.

There are also special wellness events, [illegible] free health clinics, and trade exhibits of [illegible] health products to make sure Lolo and Lola are in great shape for all the celebrations ahead.

Time spent with this beloved couple is always memorable. Why don't you drop by the various photo-op booths and preserve the memories? Visit the scrapbook workshops and create a keepsake of all your times together.

Of course, don't forget to go to your favorite mall outlets and pick up a trinket or two to show Lolo and Lola just how much you love them.

Grandparents' Day comes just once a year so make sure you make it a one of a kind celebration only at SM Supermalls!

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SM SUPERMALLS

50

MAURICE Amarles (standing, center) was a Manresa model. Pinay Manresa (seated, second from right) with his other models, among them Diona Kueser (seated, second from left), Maita Gomez (seated, far right), Jade-Pelle Velarde (standing, far left), Cherry Pie Villegas (standing, second from right), Pearlie Arcache (standing, far right)

"They were obedient and came on time," says 2008 Gawad CCP awardee

THE YOUNG Manresa tagging his clothes for a fashion show in Hong Kong

MORE Enrich his models in Bacoor, from left, Maita Gomez, Bubot Mendonoza, Trina Tejuico and Toni Serrano

Pitoy's women

AN ORDINARY OBJECT ON PITOY'S desk caught our eye—a card holder that held the calling cards of Pitoy Moreno.

How interesting—the country's premier fashion instructor, for sure, the oversized, shaved-ice-flavor-days still finds the need to hand out calling cards to whoever would need it, as if there were still many people who didn't know the name Pitoy Moreno. Even our fifty-some fresh set of high school kiddies of Pitoy Moreno.

But there that's Pitoy for you. Even with a career—and social status—that span more than half a century, Pitoy is still at it, toiling away in his atelier every day, attending parties (and funeral wakes) and social networking many nights a week, receiving clients every morning in his house, studio, or atelier as if his was a neophyte, or as if he was going hungry tomorrow. (He's not.)

Today, Pitoy gets a kick out of staging a fashion show...and being in national centerstage—as much as he did perhaps in 1962, when he showed his collection in a world-class dance in the Seattle World Fair. Sorry that no-one' coup, Pitoy, as the legional Asia Magazine once dare, "has never looked back." (It was Asia Magazine in this 1973 story that dubbed him the "Fashion Czar of Asia.") He has met and stayed close before the country's royalty and celebrities, crossed the country's fourteen seasons (all the First Ladies from Imelda Ilarde Z Garcia onwards), made friends out of the powerful and the famous who are never politics and business. And it's safe to say that he's most financially successful among the designers.

Fashion legends Pierre Balmain and Pierre Cardin once saw Pitoy's show in Paris, wanting to see Philippine costumes; they were surprised to see that those were a couturier's take on national costumes.

So—what more does Pitoy want?

"Wala na," he told us over his trademark bunch of tollowing bangs in his house.

We don't believe him. Just now he's spread our fashion in his photo archive—a precious

TONI Serrano (nee Parsons) in an elaborate Manresa gown

FROM left, in separate photos, Diona Kueser, Elena Fernando, Jodi Lichauco, Conchitina Smith-Bernardo and Maita Gomez

CELA Star Lauretta a Moreno torso

IMELDA Cajuegos in a recent Moreno creation

DARES Preptier in Moreno red terno

YONG Rodrigo Vergara

wares...from the past five decades. This is in preparation for this Wednesday, Sept. 10, when he receives the 2008 Gawad CCP Para sa Sining award for his "outstanding contributions in the field of architecture, design and allied arts (fashion design)."

Other awardees are Tita Hadaki (Dance), Ethiope and Cristina Ildefonso (Music), Menina Duque (Theater), Francisco Coching (Visual Arts), Marlon Rivera (Literature), Manuel Conde (Film), Rodrigo Perez III (Cultural Work), and the Philippine Folk Dance Society.

This is not Pitoy's first tribute and it won't be the last. Pitoy's designs have run the gamut of many fashion fashion movements, from costumes to ball gowns and beyond. They were products of various eras, from the early '50s when fashion was formal and inspired by native costumes, to the turbulent '70s when fashion runs the trail of the preceded, to the socially aware '80s, conservative '90s when the rich expressed their wealth through wedding gowns, to the new millennium, when Philippine fashion design was taken over by the young.

Yet while Pitoy may not have the full attention-grabbing design, he holds many secrets in those new generations of Filipino women, and has done so for four decades: for years and the daughters of his contemporaries.

As against in the '50s, he came upon the era of glamour and prosperity, the longest era ever when women were glamorous, elegant, and elite families prodded their women to model. Pitoy's models were and still are the socialites.

Pitoy has a somewhat interesting description of the women that—"They were obedient and came on time."

However, many of those women are now gone, including Pitoy's best friend, the late Cora Aurora Enjeu; a few women who are known for her finesse and involvement in the visual arts. It was with Cora and her family that Pitoy would spend weekends, Christmas and New Year.

But Pitoy doesn't live in the past. He's always lived in the here and now, and always is vigilant of the future.

For more than 20 years now, he's had the Jose Moreno Foundation which has won scholars to college. He relishes one thing: "a school of sewing and cutting" so that young men may learn to make clothes.

Indeed Pitoy isn't only a fashion designer. He is a social institution.

TSS

Red Cross gets generous gifts on Senator Gordon's birthday

SENATOR RICHARD J. GORDON'S idea of celebrating his mug. A birthday has always been to enjoy a simple, quiet cake-cake with close friends and (now) sons. For Gordon, his birthday is a time for introspection and prayers of thanks to God.

Thus, Gordon found it an alien concept the birthday party which the staff of the Philippine National Red Cross (PNRC), which he chairs, had wanted to organize for him this year.

But he didn't want to be a killjoy to what PNRC governor Andrew Tiongson and travel media personality Susan Go-Ichikawa had described as a "much-deserved celebration of a life being lived for the welfare of others."

Prodded by Ruhay Batallon Rep. Cirilito Cacolbaria, Gordon finally agreed to go along, on one condition:

That this birthday party be meaningful for the poor and for the victims of calamities and disasters, like those battered and left homeless by Typhoon Frank and those victimized by the sinking of the MV Princess of the Stars.

And result: Sen Gordon's birthday party last Aug. 5 did.

Thousands came from all walks of life not only to break bread with Senator Gordon, but also to give gifts to the poor.

Gordon was happy. Some P3.2 million was raised.

The fund will go to the Red Cross for its projects, including its new modern- and tsunami-resistant, fire- and calamity-relief programs, and its shelter program for those rendered homeless by calamities.

Gordon drew applause when he presented two special guests, Evangeline Wiyangco and Salvacion Agnis, which received two of the 13,000 house units built in one year by the Red Cross for families left without shelter when a typhoon hit hard Iloilo, Aklan and Capiz.

By leading their respective families and communities in building typhoon-resistant homes, Wiyangco and Agnis proved that even in the face of great adversity, the Filipino survive and better his or her lot in life, Gordon said.

He recounted his amazement in seeing here, from one structures the PNRC provided the two women, they were able to transform them into beautiful, comfy and functional homes for their families.

The senator said the Red Cross is helping build 1,500 more houses in Tacloban in a month's time.

Gordon was awakened the fund-lie maintenance Service award during the Red Cross biennial in December 2007. He again received it last April from the Japanese Red Cross, led by its president Tadateru Konoe, for his humanitarian efforts to save residents buried in the 2006 Guinsaugon, Leyte mudslide.

PRESIDENT Gloria Macapagal Arroyo and Sen. Richard Gordon

MARCUS Brooks, Ali Aston, designer Pamela Roland, Nigel Barker, the author, Rob Tauscher and Chrissy Barker

LILY O'Boyle and friends

LANIZ Lorenzo, Sen. Loren Legarda, Loida Lewis and Tonichi Cruz-Montero

Agenda-less in City that Never Sleeps

NIGEL Barker

TWISTS: Dia with tennis superstar Roger Federer

Bumped into Federer and Carson Kressley, had lunch with Loida Nicolas-Lewis and Nigel Barker

TNT TRENDS & TRENDINGS

Anton Sese Diego

IT'S NOT DIFFICULT TO FALL in love with New York. You just have to watch a Woody Allen film, "Sex and the City" or "Gossip Girl" to see how the city is as much an actor as the others in a film or TV show. It has characters, attitude, sex appeal and grit. So when my uncle, who was turning 88 years old, was celebrating his birthday in a big way it was a great excuse to go to New York.

So what do you do for 11 days without an agenda? A lot! New York is one of the cities that you would want to get lost in. As they say, it's the city that never sleeps—you can do everything, from becoming the tourists to watching Broadway shows, shopping and catching up with friends.

In New York I discovered a new luxury one that is priceless. No, it's not going to Bergdorf's or Barney's but dining on a park bench and watching the world pass you by. And with the temperature comparable to Manila's scorchers plus the humidity the setting was perfect.

I guess I was not totally without an agenda. I was doing some research for a project that would be unveiled hopefully soon. Drue is going to the Big Apple, I reminded my friends who were living there and, as a result, ran into a block with activities from noon to night. I met with brilliant lawyer Yuatieng Chua-Montes, who gave me great advice about some family matters (no pun intended). I actually saw her twice: the first occasion for lunch and the other with Sen. Loren Legarda, who was there to send off her son Lanz as he started film school at NYU.

Loida Nicolas-Lewis

While there, too, Senator Legarda had lunch with noted philanthropist Loida Nicolas-Lewis (who was cited by the Carnegie Foundation as one of the top immigrants to New York) and a leader of the Philippine-American community. They discussed the Philippine economic situation and of course, politics and who would be the next New "President-Nida." From that meeting I think Loida got her interest.

I also had lunch with Loida on another occasion; she invited me to the Harvard Club. She just arrived from Chicago to deliver a speech for the Philippine community there. What fascinates me about this woman is, despite her stature in society, she remains down-to-earth, kind and elegant. A true gem.

Another fascinating soul you lady is Lily O'Boyle. She gave a dinner for me at Bemelmans, one of the restaurants of famed chef Alain Ducasse. She invited her friends, including Interiors, international bag designer Rafe Totengco, as well as her good friend Mario Buatta, one of America's most popular decorators and the celebrated "King of Chintz."

My life as I mentioned before, was hectic at the 40th birthday of my uncle, Dr. Oscar Dia. The Oscar has lived in the US most of his life but comes to Manila often to visit relatives and friends.

Another milestone in my family is the 30th wedding anniversary of Capitolio Garag and Dhina Orea, who I would like to make special mention in this column.

I went to the US with my favorite aunt, Cirsille Lacson, to attend Tito Oscar's birthday. For his birthday party, he hosted the very romantic and popular Rainbow Room in the Rockefeller Center and had around 300 guests who flew from all parts of the US. His beautiful wife, Barbee, and daughters Lisa and Lissa had prepared a wonderful and memorable evening.

Roger and Rafe

The occasion was actually a two-day affair so we checked in at the very posh Carlyle Hotel to make time with my family. While there I bumped into tennis superstar Roger Federer. He was an unassuming and down-to-earth guy and when I told him that I was from the Philippines, he said he knew a number of being Filipino-ist, in his case, Basque. His half-Filipino grandchildren has just been ordained to ministry and is ready to Basque! Indeed, one needs to have a Rafe!

A funny thing happened while we were going to a popular bar; I was carded. Of course you know what being carded means: that the doormen or bouncer asks for your ID. This is something legislators or lawmakers here should think of doing, that bars should not allow minors inside establishments that serve alcohol.

Anyway, I told the doorman, but I am (thirty) years old. Don't I look over 18? He said, "Sir." That made my head swoon! I know this sounds quite presumptuous and arrogant but I just had to share it; such a great feeling and who knows, might not happen anymore. To be mistaken to be younger than your age and realize not those clothing wrong with that, maybe wood or all, or a health tonic(s). Still did not get inside the bar but I smiled all the way home!

Carson and Nigel

On another occasion, I bumped into Carson Kressley (of "Queer Eye" and now, "How to Look Good Naked" TV shows). I went up to him to say that I was from Manila and before I could say anything else he said, "Motherhood! How to Manila?"

I was able to catch up with one of my friends and favorite photographers, Nigel Barker. We had dinner at the very hip Bathdoken bar and restaurant. He came with his lovely wife Christie, who is expecting their second child in December. They have a 2-year-old son, Jack, so of course he told me excitedly, "It's a girl!" The dinner we were joined by designer Pamela Roland and fashion's right-hand man, Marcus Shenko, and his wife, Ali.

We had another lunch at the popular French bistro Bouley and got to talking about the new season of "America's Next Top Model" Cycle 10. In the new series, there is a transgender contestant named Isis Toussaint (your guess is as good as mine). Barker said they needed to spark the ratings this season. He laughed when he recalled a scene where he was taking photos of "her" on the beach. "I think his got a little bit excited in that one and had to wrap a towel around herself," Barker said. I have more adventures to spend about, which I will save for another time. But New York City is, and always will be, a special place for me. Can't wait to go back!

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Vicki-Hayden romance going pffft?

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anything but ordinary, and quite. They are one of the high-profile couples around.

It is said Brits is hoping to get some breathing space in Paris, and "he rather is one day at a time."

Ironically, just last month, Kho wrote his cousin about their relationship:

"The buzz is the same as in any boyfriend-girlfriend relationship: love, passion, honesty, openness and respect, etc. What differs is the people around us who are always on our case. I, being the younger one, have to prove to Vicki's acquaintances that I am not as immature and inexperienced as they'd initially think, and she always has to prove (her parents) that it is for the best, not in the skin.

"I personally believe it's harder for Vicki because, aside from what I mentioned, she also has to carry the flag of the single, more mature women, as they battle the self-righteous standards of matrimony. Just because they're above 40 (or any number for that matter) doesn't mean they are banned from falling in love, being loved and creating their own heavens by surrounding themselves with nothing else but love. The secret is yours to have."

Hard to argue with that. But, girls, ladies, women, be careful with the fantasies of youth. You could drown in it. (Without your scrubs!)

Feeding program

According to the Food and Nutrition Research Institute (FNRI), over 25 percent or more than 1.5-million 0-5-year children are underweight, and over 30 percent or 1.8-million are under height.

Department of Social Welfare and Development Secretary Esperanza Cabral says the first five years of life is crucial to the growth and development of the child.

With over 6-million of the country's population who are children under five years old, I believe, through Richmond Kraeer's Pangkabuhayang Batang Pinoy feeding program, is working to help change the numbers and the fate of children, one community at a time.

Thirty of the most malnourished children in a barangay are given one nutritious hot meal a day for over six months.

Pangkabuhayang Batang Pinoy has since been completed in over 40 feeding modules in Manila, Batangas, Isa Pilar, Bicolandia and Cavite. Recently it concluded its feeding program in Calatagan, Batangas, with R. Zobel Foundation.

When the program was running in the first three months in Calatagan, the changes in the children already became noticeable. Their appetite improved. Weight and height increased.

The feeding program has benefited over 1,000 children, with a high success rate of normalizing nutritional levels and increasing the kids' heights.

No coconut for Burlesque Queen

After her tribal-attire performance during the 10th anniversary of the Bob Medford Group Inc. launch, Queen of Burlesque Dita Von Teese flew to Thailand and booked herself at the Chiva-Som Spa.

The reason? She was told to have been disappointed with the experience she and her companions had in a hotel's luxurious spa.

Dr. Bella gave Ms Von Teese a spa treat. Ms Von Teese originally wanted to try something local and chose the Hawaiian massage, a local therapy that includes fresh coconut scrub. But she was told there was no coconut oil that day and was made to select another service.

She later went for the Himalayan Energy Ritual, a body bead and scalp massage. Again Ms Von Teese was told the tools needed for her ritual massage was not for that massage.

Finally, she chose the Hawaiian Healing Stone Massage, which, fortunately, was available.

It was a very embarrassed and disappointed Dr. Bella herself who wrote a letter to the spa manager.

How could coconut oil not be available in the famous spa—and in coconut-rich Philippines yet? An attendant could have just bought oil from the mall across the hotel.

WESTERN UNION

Western Union now enforcing "One ID policy" across Philippine locations

As a result of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas ruling last May that lifts the two-ID policy for all financial transactions made by banks and non-banks under BSP supervision, The Western Union Company has expanded its list of accepted IDs to include valid student photo IDs for non-college/senior age students starting from this new school year.

"This is indeed welcome news for both Western Union and its customers especially now that classes have started. Students with parents based in the provinces can easily transact through Western Union by simply presenting one valid photo ID," said Vanessa Bicorning, marketing director, Philippines, The Western Union Company.

Western Union has also lowered its domestic money transfer fees to as low as P19 for transactions amounting to P200 and below. This special promotion, which was launched on May 3, 2008, is intended to encourage transactions during the enrollment period.

"We've had very encouraging feedback on the Western Union domestic money transfer service because it's convenient, reliable, and fast. Recipients can get the money within minutes from over 7, 1100 Agent locations in the Philippines. We hope the special promotion rates can allow more consumers in the Philippines, including those who regularly send money to their children studying in other parts of the country, to experience the service."

Bicorning also stated that now, even employment IDs issued by private companies and government offices and integrated Ser of the Philippines (IBP) IDs are also accepted for transactions. Following is the complete list of valid IDs:

- Passport
- Driver's license
- Professional Regulations Commission (PRC) ID
- Integrated Ser of the Philippines (IBP) ID
- National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) clearance
- Police Clearance Certificate (Electronic)
- Postal ID
- Voter's ID
- Government Service and Insurance System (GSIS) e-Card
- Social Security System (SSS) Card
- Senior Citizen Card
- Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA) ID
- OFW ID (Please advise the full name of "OFW")
- Seaman's Book (Please explain)
- Alien Certification of Registration
- Firearm license
- Employment ID (Government and Private)
- Student ID (for non-working/minor age students)
- Other IDs issued by the Government and its instrumentalities (Digitized hard plastic type)

About Western Union

The Western Union Company (NYSE: WU) is the world's leader in global money transfer services. Together with its affiliates, Orlandi Valuta and Vigo, Western Union provides consumers with fast, reliable and convenient ways to send and receive money around the world, as well as send payments and purchase money orders. It operates through a network of more than 345,000 Agent locations in over 200 countries and territories. Pioneers for 'Business-ing Telegraph' services, the original Western Union dates back to 1851. For more information, visit www.westernunion.com.

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Sunday LIFESTYLE

A cool partnership

By John Frederick and Joan Mari Camus

OUR DAD, LUIS M. Camus, began his air-conditioning contracting business, Camus Engineering, in 1967 after a stint with Delta Motors, where he had put up the air-conditioning division.

Like most young entrepreneurs during that time, he was a member of the Manila Jaycees, where in 1961 he met Henry Sy Sr.—who was also starting out his business—and the friendship developed.

At the time Dad started his company, Mr. Sy was about to open his Shoemart store in Makati, his first in the area, next to host of Kiddie Theater. They had a discussion on whether it should be fully air-conditioned or just ventilated, and later on Mr. Sy was convinced air-conditioning was necessary, so Dad would get it. "When you are in a place longer, chances are you will buy more."

While our generation may take it for granted, a fully air-conditioned store was a revolutionary idea at the time. But it worked. Mr. Sy discovered that because it was comfortable, customers would stay longer in the store, browse around, and ultimately buy more. And that was the beginning of what we could call a cool partnership, which endures to this day.

LUIS Camus with Arnolfo V. Paulo of SM at Camus 40th Anniversary with retro theme

Dad says working with Mr. Sy was very exciting. "We would leave every Friday evening, day. During the time that he was still active, we would walk all through the construction sites, and when he would notice something was not quite right, he would immediately call the attention of the contractor involved. Sometimes, there would be some lapses in our air-conditioning work, and he would notice and call my attention. I considered this very constructive advice."

As we were growing up, Dad would share with us some of the things he learned working with Mr. Sy. One was to "prepare and build when the economy is down. And when it goes up, because it eventually will go up, you open the doors."

Mr. Sy also taught us "there is no substitute for hard work." Dad recalls him working about 16–17 hours a day, setting a good example to his employees and business partners.

Apart from helping our company grow by giving us air-conditioning contracting jobs, SM has been a good partner all these years because it pays very diligently. Dad would say that when he would work with SM, "You finish the job, you collect, no problem."

SM has grown phenomenally since the time Dad started working with them in 1967, and we are happy to have grown with them. We like to say that to date, we've installed 200,000 tons of air-conditioning in all our projects in the Philippines. And we are privileged to continue supplying the mechanical works for the air-conditioning requirements of SM malls and stores.

We now do much of our business with them, who is in charge of the SM Engineering group. Like his father, Hans is hands-on, and with today's technology and his young energy, the pace has become faster. "There was a time when it would take us three and a half years to build a mall. Today, we can open a mall in less than two years because of modern technology in construction. Hans has definitely followed in his father's footsteps and his industry matches his father's.

Like Hans, we are part of the second generation in our family business. Dad today continues to be president and chairman of the board, while we have our own roles: John Frederick is in charge of collections and finance, while Joel Mari is general manager.

We both have our memories growing up with the family business. John Frederick remembers going with Dad to projects like the Regent of Manila as a little boy. "There were times when he would accompany Dad to a meeting with Tabang (as Mr. Sy Sr. is fondly called) in his office in the building beside the Philippine Stock Exchange in Makati.

After graduating from high school, he asked Dad if he and his good friend Ralph Recto would help part-time in Kenlis Bus. Assigned to the accounting department, he fast-lost some cents and had to start at the bottom—our first lesson in the value of money and hard work. John has been working full time with the company since 1993 after graduating from his Management course in Ateneo.

Joel Mari remembers Dad always being on the go, and working very hard for our family so we could have comfortable lives. After finishing a Mechanical Engineering course in 1992, he assisted Jaime Dad for four years because he had to see if he could try something else first. After four years, he realized the family business was his destiny and ended up working for Dad.

We also learned a lot of things growing up and working with Dad. He taught us the value of hard work and discipline. He taught us to work hard so our children can have a better life. He was a disciplinarian, but it taught us how to be disciplined in our work today.

He also taught us the value of integrity, of being able to stand up for what is right.

Being in the contracting business, he would constantly do do everything by the book and the way it should be done to protect our name.

There are values, which we hope to impart to our sons, Luis III and Manuel, who at the time of this writing are in their first year in college.

When we look back, it's been an amazing journey for Dad and Mr. Sy and the companies they have founded. Dad has always said he is glad that he met Henry Sy. We all have learned a lot from him. He has shown us how to be successful in business, and we hope our future generations will also—in our own small way—contribute to his success, too.

A AMAZING FAMILY: Luis Camus with sons John and Butch in front of the Milarca or Sabio before a race

Top lensman Ernie Sarmiento exhibits the key images of a tumultuous era

Golden eye, silver lens

By Florencio C. Burgos

TO CELEBRATE HIS 50TH birthday and 25th year in photojournalism, Ernie Sarmiento will hold his first solo show, "Ore Plata Mata," Sept. 17-24 at the cinema lobby of Ayala Museum.

The exhibit is conceptualized by Sarmiento's 23-year old daughter, Isabel, a journalism major, and his wife, Ilyn Bautista, the exhibit's opening on Sarmiento's birthday is "perfect timing."

"Ore," which means gold, signifies Sarmiento's age; "Plata," which means silver, refers to the 25th year in photojournalism; and "Mata," the Tagalog word for eye, symbolizes the photographer's eye for a good shot.

"It is through one's eye where images are basically processed and eventually captured on cameras," Sarmiento said.

Sarmiento, chief photographer of the Philippine Daily Inquirer, traverses the worlds of politics and celebrity/social events. The 50 pictures to be showcased are some of the defining images of an era.

The photos ranged from those shot in the early '80s by Sarmiento when he was a staff member of The Manilastar, the 60-year-old official student organ of the University of Santo Tomas, to the present.

"Ore Plata Mata" features the famous and the infamous and ordinary people—"anything that matters to my interests" selection they are lowest relating to epoch break or the would be president Corazon Aquino addressing a mammoth crowd at Rizal Park in 1984.

Sarmiento shares the belief of Henri Cartier Bresson, father of modern photojournalism: "Photography is the simultaneous recognition, in a fraction of a second, of the significance of an event." Sarmiento always looks for "romance and meaning" in his subjects.

"All the photos in my exhibit are my personal favorites; each has a story to tell," Sarmiento said. "There are many more impressive moments in my beats but I agree with what Michael Mezzacio, managing director of the Netherlands-based World Press Photo Foundation, told me when he visited the country last month: 'Photojournalists are the most disorganized people on earth.'" Sarmiento plans to master them for his next exhibit.

Inspiration

Sarmiento credits his 88-year-old father, Ariel, for inserting him on photography. He started as an apprentice to his dad, who worked at the Philippines Herald at Muñoz during the terms of Presidents Ramon Magsaysay and Diosdado Macapagal.

"He is the biggest influence as to why I'm in this profession," Sarmiento says about his father.

When Sarmiento was still in elementary he would often help his dad focus the view in the camera before he exposes the film. He also helped develop and print reasonably hundreds of images at big as 20x24.

Before settling on photography, Sarmiento finished a two-year vocational course in Electronics. Then he took up Electronic and Communication Engineering at UST.

"It was [in UST] where I got exposed to photojournalism, especially when Pope John Paul II visited the country and went to the UST campus in 1981. I was assigned to get his photo, which was splashed on half a page of the Manilastar," Sarmiento recalled. "My only regret was that there was no byline. Every passionate photojournalist will treasure a small credit more than the monetary pay."

Concurrently teaches Advance News Photography at the Asian Center for Journalism of the Ateneo de Manila University. He has participated in group shows, which mostly focused on sports.

His awards include the 1986 Rodolfo Aguinis Photographers and 2002 Sports Photographer given by the Philippine Sportswriters Association. He also won first, second and third prizes at the 2002 MMDA Photo Contest.

"DAKWOOD Mutiny"

Magical moment

For Sarmiento, photography is capturing a moment at the right speed and right composition; a fleeting magical moment preserved in one picture.

"The satisfaction you derive in photography is immediate, especially in this digital stage. Either your picture is awesome or not. When it gets published the next day, it's one of the satisfactions to some photo," he said.

"But, no matter how much you love your photo, it is still the editor who will decide whether to use it or not. No one must learn how to deal with disappointment," he said with a laugh.

After 25 years in the business, Sarmiento considers the become photographers who "have been under his tutelage and his Ateneo students." Adds: I believe lessons from my kabir could no longer long" as his greatest achievements.

But, he still dreams of capturing images of how people respond to economic crisis. "I would love to make an audio slide show of their stories to put on my blog: http://ernsp.blogspot.com," Sarmiento said.

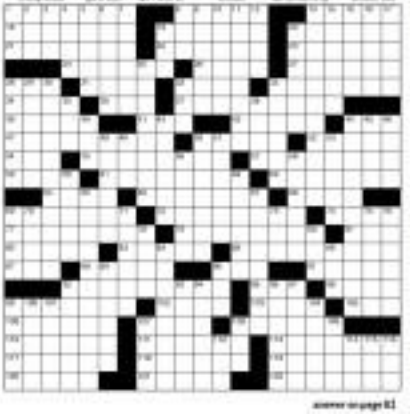
"Ore Plata Mata" is sponsored by Tollsma and Ayala Malls, Canon Philippines, Dependable Packaging and Printing, Digital Q Image Management, Frames by Raul Tingco and Kuizo Exhibit Systems Technology Corp.

Sunday Crossword

PREMIER CROSSWORD/ By Frank A. Longo — E 0207

ACROSS

1 Fisher-Price's Ms. Pac-Man? 5 Hot ___ steak 10 Pilot's announcement 14 Cheese-like 15 Hollywood 16 Nonsense 17 Hawaiian hello 18 Prize in Monopoly 19 Arranged, like a ballet 20 Unchanged 21 Unchanged, as a dollar 22 Hot ___ Toddies 23 Pasta-serving time 24 Soup 26 — Free (not over once) 27 Comes over 28 Hot spot at the Taj 30's 33 Cider 34 Small "drops," briefly 35 Cracked 36 "Piss and Moan" Presidential hopeful 38 Dollar — (Wall Street) 39 Soup maker 41 Dastardly villain 43 Unchanged 44 "Piss and Moan" Presidential hopeful 46 Cheese-like 48 Hot ___ (spicy) 49 Unchanged 50 Hot ___ (Wall Street) 52 Hot ___ (Wall Street) 53 Unchanged 54 Chicago's Ida ___ Wells 55 Unchanged 56 Chicago's Ida ___ Wells 57 Unchanged 58 Chicago's Ida ___ Wells 59 Unchanged 60 Chicago's Ida ___ Wells 61 Unchanged 62 Chicago's Ida ___ Wells 63 Unchanged 64 Chicago's Ida ___ Wells 65 Unchanged 66 Chicago's Ida ___ Wells 67 Unchanged 68 Chicago's Ida ___ Wells 69 Unchanged 70 Chicago's Ida ___ Wells 71 Unchanged 72 Chicago's Ida ___ Wells 73 Unchanged 74 Chicago's Ida ___ Wells 75 Unchanged 76 Chicago's Ida ___ Wells 77 Unchanged 78 Chicago's Ida ___ Wells 79 Unchanged 80 Chicago's Ida ___ Wells 81 Unchanged 82 Chicago's Ida ___ Wells 83 Unchanged 84 Chicago's Ida ___ Wells 85 Unchanged 86 Chicago's Ida ___ Wells 87 Unchanged 88 Chicago's Ida ___ Wells 89 Unchanged 90 Chicago's Ida ___ Wells 91 Unchanged 92 Chicago's Ida ___ Wells 93 Unchanged 94 Chicago's Ida ___ Wells 95 Unchanged 96 Chicago's Ida ___ Wells 97 Unchanged 98 Chicago's Ida ___ Wells 99 Unchanged 100 Chicago's Ida ___ Wells 101 Unchanged 102 Chicago's Ida ___ Wells 103 Unchanged 104 Chicago's Ida ___ Wells 105 Unchanged 106 Chicago's Ida ___ Wells 107 Unchanged 108 Chicago's Ida ___ Wells 109 Unchanged 110 Chicago's Ida ___ Wells 111 Unchanged 112 Chicago's Ida ___ Wells 113 Unchanged 114 Chicago's Ida ___ Wells 115 Unchanged 116 Chicago's Ida ___ Wells 117 Unchanged 118 Chicago's Ida ___ Wells 119 Unchanged 120 Chicago's Ida ___ Wells 121 Unchanged 122 Chicago's Ida ___ Wells 123 Unchanged 124 Chicago's Ida ___ Wells 125 Unchanged 126 Chicago's Ida ___ Wells 127 Unchanged 128 Chicago's Ida ___ Wells 129 Unchanged 130 Chicago's Ida ___ Wells 131 Unchanged 132 Chicago's Ida ___ Wells 133 Unchanged 134 Chicago's Ida ___ Wells 135 Unchanged 136 Chicago's Ida ___ Wells 137 Unchanged 138 Chicago's Ida ___ Wells 139 Unchanged 140 Chicago's Ida ___ Wells 141 Unchanged 142 Chicago's Ida ___ Wells 143 Unchanged 144 Chicago's Ida ___ Wells 145 Unchanged 146 Chicago's Ida ___ Wells 147 Unchanged 148 Chicago's Ida ___ Wells 149 Unchanged 150 Chicago's Ida ___ Wells 151 Unchanged 152 Chicago's Ida ___ Wells 153 Unchanged 154 Chicago's Ida ___ Wells 155 Unchanged 156 Chicago's Ida ___ Wells 157 Unchanged 158 Chicago's Ida ___ Wells 159 Unchanged 160 Chicago's Ida ___ Wells 161 Unchanged 162 Chicago's Ida ___ Wells 163 Unchanged 164 Chicago's Ida ___ Wells 165 Unchanged 166 Chicago's Ida ___ Wells 167 Unchanged 168 Chicago's Ida ___ Wells 169 Unchanged 170 Chicago's Ida ___ Wells 171 Unchanged 172 Chicago's Ida ___ Wells 173 Unchanged 174 Chicago's Ida ___ Wells 175 Unchanged 176 Chicago's Ida ___ Wells 177 Unchanged 178 Chicago's Ida ___ Wells 179 Unchanged 180 Chicago's Ida ___ Wells 181 Unchanged 182 Chicago's Ida ___ Wells 183 Unchanged 184 Chicago's Ida ___ Wells 185 Unchanged 186 Chicago's Ida ___ Wells 187 Unchanged 188 Chicago's Ida ___ Wells 189 Unchanged 190 Chicago's Ida ___ Wells 191 Unchanged 192 Chicago's Ida ___ Wells 193 Unchanged 194 Chicago's Ida ___ Wells 195 Unchanged 196 Chicago's Ida ___ Wells 197 Unchanged 198 Chicago's Ida ___ Wells 199 Unchanged 200 Chicago's Ida ___ Wells



answer on page R3

Servants of the Risen Christ marks 10 years in Tarlac

ALL ROADS WILL LEAD TO TARLAC on Sept. 14, the Feast of the Triumph of the Holy Cross, which coincides with the 10th-year anniversary of the Servants of the Risen Christ. The monastic community is the outcrop of the Holy Relic of the True Cross of Jesus that was enshrined by then Papal Nuncio Archbishop Fernando Filoni, together with some archbishops and bishops of the Philippines, at Monasterio de Tarlac on a quiet commissary to Lutlipan, San José, Tarlac.

Reverend Isidro Cortes, the prior, was invited in 2000 by Ruis Rufoff, president of the Philippine-German Association in Dortchausen, to attend the World Youth Day in Cologne, Germany. During this visit, he met Msgr. Volker Bauer, from the Diocese of Essen in Germany whose the time was the custodian of the relic of the Holy Cross.

Bauer was looking for the ideal and willing candidate who would take over the guardianship of the relic, since the monastic life in Europe was slowly fading. He chose Servant of the Risen Christ because of their devotion to the Holy Cross and being a monastic community in a dominantly Catholic country in Asia.

History of the relic

Queen Helena, mother of Emperor Constantine, in her journey to the Holy Land in 312 AD, had the temple dedicated to Venus destroyed. Underneath was Christ's sepulchre and three crosses. To discern which of the crosses was Christ's, they were brought to a gravely ill woman. When she touched the third cross, she got healed—a sign that this was the true Cross of Jesus. Following the will of Constantinople, fragments of the Cross were divided among the knights as trophy and were distributed to churches and monasteries in Europe. Various monasteries, avid in all the true Cross, were encased in a silver sarcoma engraved with Christian symbols associated with the Crucifixion, lies in the Chapel of the Holy Cross in the peaceful and quiet Monasterio de Tarlac.

Twice a year the relic is open for public viewing, on Jan. 30, the date it was enshrined, and Sept. 14, Feast of the Triumph of the Holy Cross. Daily Masses are [excerpt Thursday]

PURELY PERSONAL
Josephine Cuneta

at 10:30 a.m. followed by a veneration of the relic. It is traditionally believed that more healing takes place during these dates.

Archbishop Ernesto Salgado of Lipan and Tarlac Bishop Florentino Cinense will lead the consecrational Mass Sept. 14, 9 a.m. Exposition of the relic will follow.

Trip to Marian shrines

Fr. Gerry Taplacio, Bible scholar, will lead pilgrimages to Lourdes, France, and other Marian shrines Oct. 14-20. Organized by SPG Travel, the pilgrimage celebrates the 150th anniversary of Our Lady's apparition to Bernadette Soubirous in Lourdes. Text Sonia at 0918-6954899 or call 7731757.

Father Gerry says, "Every pilgrimage is a fulfillment of my studies in Biblical archeology and in how I can help people discover and understand the events in the Gospel, in the excavations of holy places and in the expression of their souls."

Bagan bishop

A Franciscan Capuchin is the new bishop of Bagan, Indofia. Bishop Joseph Saosa will be installed as Archdiocesan Cathedral in Santiago Ugl, Gasa, Indofia, on Sept. 9.

Bishop Saosa, 63, was born in Mangkayan, Bangsat, Ilo. 5, 1945. He entered the Capuchin Order on May 17, 1960. He studied philosophy at St. Anthony's School of Philosophy (Capuchin House of Studies), in Bacolo, Indofia (1963-1966). He finished his Master of Arts at Asian Social Institute (Manila), specialize in Spirituality at Gregorian Pontifical University (1974-1976), and Doctorate in Spirituality at Bonaventure University in New York.

Father Joseph professed perpetual vows in Pamplona, Spain, in 1967. He was ordained deacon in Rome, Cavite, in 1971. He was ordained priest in Greece/Llanera City on June 27 of the same year. Before his ordination as bishop, Most Reverend Saosa was parish priest of San Isidro Chaudron Gumbaranga Bilaquay.

Hermandad

The Cofradia de la Nuestra Señora de la Soledad de Porta Vaga is hosting the Hermandad de la Sagrada Pasion de Jesus' 7th Encuentro meeting. Gral "Hermandad Por La Soledad, Kabesa ng Isang Ayuno" The shall be held Sept. 12, to celebration of the Hermandad's first-year anniversary and also in anticipation of the 30th anniversary of the Canonical Coronation of the Nuestra Señora de la Soledad de Porta Vaga.

Activities include pilgrimage to the seven eldest churches in Cavite, namely Parish of St. Michael in Bacoor; Cathedral Parish of Our Lady of the Pillar in Imus; Parish of St. Mary Magdalene in Rosario; Parish of San Roque, which is the Shrine of Soledad de Porta Vaga in Cavite City; Parish of the Most Holy Rosary in Kawit; Parish of the Most Holy Cross, which is the Shrine of St. Augustine in Tanza; and Parish of St. Francis of Assisi in Dra. What where most of the activities will be done.

Delegates from cities and municipalities in Metro Manila and nearby provinces shall experience the religious customs and traditions of Cavite.

Fr. Virgilio Sarne Hendoza, spiritual advisor, will give a historical background on the different parishes and devotion to the Virgin de la Soledad. The Hermandad de la Sagrada Pasion de Jesus is an organization of owners of Holy Week processional images around the country.

Retreat center

The John Mary Vianney Retreat Center was inaugurated and blessed in Aug. 23 by Cardinal Ezudencio Rosales who celebrated Mass at the center's chapel.

Attending were guests and benefactors headed by Felicidad Ty of the Mil Bridge.

Located in a 1.3-hectare property in Tagaytay, the center is run by Msgr. Otto Bernardo and Fr. Boy Concepcion. The center provides spiritual help to strengthen people's faith and emotionally. The Chapel of Transfiguration is the heart of the center.

Sunday LIFESTYLE Relationships

The older woman, the younger man

By Chi Rocas

THOUGHTFREEDOM ASSUME MUSE: Inside clothes... his silky mop of hair is salt-and-pepper, while my dyed job is covers remains resilient brown in the shade—the truth is, I am older.

At any rate, it has never bothered us. In the absence of any legal or church-controlled vows for the first two decades, we made up our own rules as we went along.

We began with a simple one, which has become harder and harder to live by: he must never, but never, weigh less than I do.

I don't exactly come from a chubby line, but with my advancing years and slowing metabolism, weight is effortlessly gained.

He has, gotta that have produced a bun line and been helped by sports (particularly tennis) make for a decided advantage.

At the moment, the role has been reversed: He is about 10 lbs heavier. But until he was in his early 30s, and still smoking, he topped at 120 lbs.

Knockout dedication

I have good genes myself—which guaranteed longevity that, perhaps, we could assist on being able to dodder together in old age.

That was, in fact, the reasoning line he gave me, along with a book of poems by Allan R. Bosworth Milling, one of my favorite poets, on which he wrote a knockout dedication.

We lived together as soon as we legally could and began working out our character, temperament, social and cultural differences, which were a handful, as does quarters and a day at a date.

I don't really remember any woes owing to age difference, unless it has to do with sleeping habits. I'm a morning person, out of bed and nerts' to go at sunrise, and invariably set for bed by the early evening. Thus, I abandon him in the living room watching sports on TV or in his workroom, and leave him to feel the next morning. He also both agree that meeting is bad form.

It must be a question of temperament rather than age. Anyway, dropping habits are no big deal, and they don't take away a bit from the older woman's natural advantage.

She has resolved most of her hang-ups. (She is more comfortable with her sexuality in her postmenopausal state. She has acquired most of her dream possessions, or come to terms with the lack of them. She has traveled to most places she had to see at least once.

Her children are grown and independent and have given her grandchildren, her immovable (but intimate). With a fair pension income, she wants not.

Same situation

I have friends in the same situation. A few of them beat me to the age seniority over my man.

Girls; a classmate is 12 years older than her husband, who not only has scans to treat her five children from her first marriage as his own but even welcomes her first husband's visits. You guessed it, he's a foreigner.

Enya, a classmate-in-law had given up to spinsterhood despite her elite good looks and talent for singing and dancing, takes the cake. At 56, she finally met her man: whom she joined the church choir of her parish on Long Island, New York. He was the choirmaster; only 33 and Filipino.

So she was telling us her story at our golden jubilee a few years ago. I saw pictures of her in my mind in her debutante's gown, dancing with her dad, and of her other husband in his christening gown cradled in his mother's arms.

What I conjured up for myself was far benign—I in my Maryknoll gala uniform at my graduation from Grade 6, my husband in short pants just entering Grade 1.

Other happy endings

I can think of more such happy pairings. One of the happiest, in fact, comes from my own family.

Tito Peping, now 83, a dead ringer for Marcello Mastroianni in his prime, was 39 in The Carmen's 30 when they got together. She brought to the relationship three children from her first marriage, and would bagel Jim more by him.

It was a relationship so controversial as could be and seemed headed for disaster. But they were so insanely over one another it was almost scary.

The first time they were separated from each other—she had to be with a daughter who had given birth in the States—Tito Peping sang "Blues Have Blue" to her on the phone until she came back home.

Tito Carmen passed away a decade ago. At a recent family gathering, as I was getting food from the buffet for my mother, Tito Peping held my arm and said seeing me serve my mother reminded him of Tita Carmen. After marrying her, he never had to serve himself.

At our age, our time is bound now and then to come to mind. Endless show women live longer, and we reckon our 60-year gap means things not said makes on a perilous month.

Just the other night, I caught Jane Fonda on Larry King—she's exactly my age—and I got my affirmation. She was speaking about her current relationship, with a fortysomething younger man. I thought, he she looked fit and radiant, and certainly younger than our age.

Obliging the multitude audience on the question it no doubt wanted to ask, she leaned forward in a gesture of theatrical intimacy and said in a stage whisper: "It gets better!"

Jane Fonda on 'Larry King' about her current relationship with a younger man: 'It gets better'

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SUMMIT MEDIA

Pros and cons of reality TV

LAST WEDNESDAY, I WAS INVITED TO speak at a forum in Miriam College on the positive and negative roles of reality TV. Psychiatrist Randy Dellosa and reality TV hero Sheila Alarcon (of "Eksena") were in the panel as well.

Reality television, as defined by Wikipedia, is "a genre of television programming which presents purportedly unscripted dramatic or humorous situations, documents actual events, and features ordinary people instead of professional actors. Such shows frequently portray a modified and highly influenced form of reality, with participants put in exotic locations or abnormal situations, sometimes standing to win in certain ways by off-screen handlers, and with events sometimes sensationalized through editing and other post-production techniques."

To find out what Filipino parents like me thought of reality TV, I conducted an informal survey from among 50 participants composed of friends, colleagues and classmates. Thank God for e-mail, multiply and Facebook, the responses, both animated and insightful, came in very quickly.

Parents' concerns

Interestingly, all the parents I surveyed watched reality TV with their children, varying in frequency from "sometimes" to "all the time." Foremost among their concerns were the following: projection of values and language used; exposure to sex and violence; strong impressions given regarding love and relationships; behaving "over the top"; encouragement of voyeurism and public display of what is life that should remain private.

Many of these concerns were my issues as well. This is the reason why, since his adults, I like sitting and watching shows like "Project Runway," "America's Next Top Model" and "American Idol" with my children. Once upon a time, when it was very new, we were avid viewers of the "Pinoy Big Brother" Celebrity and Teen editions and would each night list our favorites on "Pinoy Dream Academy."

Based on an informal survey of 50 parents, the Top Seven Reality TV Shows are as follows:

ROOTS AND WINGS

Cathy Babao-Gabalfin

1. America's Next Top Model
2. Project Runway
3. Amazing Race
4. Iron Chef
5. American Idol
6. Clash/Stage
7. The Apprentice

Parents who watch these shows with their children say that they use the wrong examples they see on television as teachable moments. "Offensive scenes are examples of what they need to avoid in life," one mom said. Another one told me, "I ask my kids how they feel about a particular scene so that I can gauge if I have implanted the right values." One huge fan of the show "Amazing Race" would watch it with her teenage boys and use the different stops and stunts by which the participants would cope with the stressful situations.

Worried about content

All of the parents were in agreement that much can be improved in the content of reality television shows, more especially the locally produced ones. "I worry about violence and the glorification of negative behavior. Does one need to behave badly to succeed or be noticed?"

One mother feels that some of the locally produced shows place unnecessary stress on the lives of the participants akin to "stress in an experiment."

In general, parents are in agreement that many of the shows need to "unlock the limiting cultural values that they cause the viewer to gain. They also feel very strongly about setting limits as to what scenes can be considered by shared with the public so they do not appear offensive. They want to emphasize the positive over the negative and use the show as a vehicle for values formation.

Curiously, the shows appeal to our dark and voyeuristic side. It's really a mix-edged sword when you think about it. These shows will not cease to prosper if there is no audience that watches it. Though media are powerful and a tool for good (or evil), depending on which way you look at it, the consumer at the viewer can empower himself or herself too, by choosing and being more discerning of the programs they watch.

Shadow of self

Prof. Bernie Morilla of Miriam College raised a point that was echoed by Dellosa and me; that on the positive side, reality shows can be used in such a way that the program reveals our true selves.

Morilla, a clinical psychologist and head of the wellness center in Miriam College, spoke briefly about Carl Jung's concept of the Shadow, which is everything in us that is unconscious, repressed, undeveloped and denied and which we project onto other people.

"We are driven by our brainwaves to be authentic persons," Morilla said.

Unlike reality TV contestants in dates, people need to take greater responsibility of their lives. As in books, the best programs are those that reveal our true selves, and in the process make us better human beings.

E-mail the author at cathybalbao@gmail.com

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An ex-BF threatens to harm her

DEAR EMILY,

I had a relationship with a married man for more than three years. I am a single parent with one son, and I would like to start life anew, according to what my Catholic upbringing has taught me.

The problem is, my former boyfriend just won't let me go. He has threatened to kill me just so no other man can have me. My papers for Canada are in process and he has told me that he will use his connections to prevent me from leaving the country.

I have filed an affidavit of desistance with the barangay where I am residing just for them to know that if something happens to me, it's my ex-boyfriend who is to blame.

I've stopped liking him because he is married and he is sleeping with four other women (I can vouch for three of them through his own cell phones).

—STARTING LIFE ANEW

EMILY'S POST

Emily A. Mercado

You cannot just file a complaint against your boyfriend with your barangay. This is your life we're talking about, not your dog's!

Make your story of a boyfriend know you mean business by filing your complaints—first in a police station near you so that his threat will be recorded in the official blotter, and so is the fraud's affair or make a criminal case against him and put a stranglehold on his cell phone.

He has another life to live aside with you as the victim, so you might as well show how tough you are to this jerk who is seven names rake so far as naiveté. You two were to love once, but now it is over, hopes, period!

What is the word "no" does he not understand?

What connections does he have in law with the Canadian immigration? And what harmful gossip will he tell them to affect your departure? That his mistress who is a single mother has not only left him count-monies-ly—a four-timing married man—for good, but is running away to save her dear life while he is threatening to smell out?

Set him be. The Canadian consulate might even harass your departure because of this criminal in the making.

Just remember that he cannot kill you if it is not your time yet. He is not God. Nevertheless, he has no license to make your life miserable.

E-mail the author at emarcado@inquirer.com.ph. Subject: Lifestyle, or send your letters to Emerson Lee at to www.pbs.org/pbl and listen to Ali Sherzai co-host the program "Balitaan Ngayon," 7:15-8:30 p.m., Monday-Friday, on dzAB 1264.2 MHz.)

Sunday LIFESTYLE

CONDURA
THE NEGOSYO REF
FREE
NEGOSYO START-UP KIT

RED CROSS Lady Colchelle Barlaan, Bobi Civil, Dennis Valdes, Red Cross Lady Tisha C. Bautista and Dennie Tanseco

MAKATI Red Cross chair is turned over to Elmer Ogalino, Philip Pascual, John Tiang, Manila Bulletin, CCP's Lou Ringpis, Dee Princess, Lourdes Quesada, Nelly Evangelista, CCP's Raoul Litana and Geraldine Rapsin

Goodbye, saddlebags and 'puson'!

TESSA! *Text Prieto-Valdez*

In my mid-forties, I wear controlwear to fight flabs and sags

MY MID-FORTY LIFE OFFICIALLY BEGAN yesterday. That's the sort of event that warrants a full-length visit to the mirror to all my naked glory. Is it time to submit to Dr. Vicki Belo's wonder services? Are those curves still defying gravity?

Thank goodness for the answers lie in Maidenform's Flexees Shapewear line, my newly discovered secret. Maidenform has redefined controlwear by blending comfort with maximum support. You only see Flexees' effective shapers, the line gives tons of movement while eliminating bulges or provide the silhouette desired.

My personal fave is the Maidenform Thigh Slimmer, which flatteringly fights flab to forge a functional form, and flatter the feminine figure, in short, goodbye saddlebags and "puson"!

Hubs Tom—who's fight, high-grade materials, the controlwear line offers seamless, built-in contours, making clothes fall better. For specific areas, try the Maidenform High Leg Brief, the Underarm and the Waistnipper, all of which results in modern miracle feat. Things have come a long way from the Maidenform bra of old.

Raja's gala

I discovered Flexees when I received my kit bag from the Raja Surf Club Dinner Fashion Show at the Makati Shangri-La, Sept. 5.

Instead of lugging around heavy gift sweeps after the show, producer Veronica Laurel-Hermanos thought of delivering them to the Raja Surf ladies the week before the show, thanks to the services of Air 21.

Maidenform's partnership with designer Raja Laurel officially bears fruit at the Gala. Raja has incorporated a few Maidenform pieces into some of his designs. These will surely be showstoppers.

Raja Surf is the culminating event of many fundraising activities over the past months that have been held for the Philippine National Red Cross Makati branch. Aside from the highly successful Shape and PhilWeb-sponsored Texas Hold'em Charity Poker Tournament at the Shangri-La Country Club, there was also Watsons For Real, a

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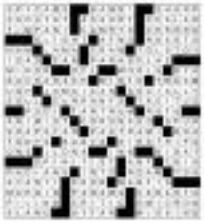
APELIN-BENITO

Marieanne C. Pe Benito will wed Mark Apelin at the Shrine of St. Therese, Pasay on Sept. 6. The bride will wear a gown by Jesse Sedra and the groom will wear a Ready-Wear creation. Reception will be at the Bird Ballroom of Makati Shangri-La.

ANSWER TO SUNDAY CROSSWORD



DE LA CRUZ-VILLACORTE

Edwin Gabriel de la Cruz, son of Romulo and Filomena de la Cruz, and Melanie Lubiano Villacorte, daughter of Emiliano and Lalla Villacorte, were recently wed at the San Isidro Labrador Parish Church in Talavera, Nueva Ecija. Reception was held at the Tropical Garden Hotel and Hotel de Barangay San Manuel in Talavera.

Milestones

We welcome announcements of weddings and engagements. Submit names of engaged couple, names of parents, date and place of wedding, and gown designer along with a photo of the couple and a sketch of the bridal gown. If any, to the inquirer, 5th floor, 800 Mezzanine Corner Shaw Office 1261 Makati City. E-mail to lifestyle@inquirer.com.ph. A photo of the bride and groom is required if the wedding has already taken place. Announcements will be printed depending on space availability and at no cost to the senders.

NICOLAS-SERRANO

Joyson Nicolas, son of Quirino (deceased) and Remedios Nicolas, recently wed the least with Ateliers Serrano, daughter of Isidro and Lourdes Serrano, at Sto. Niño Parish Church in Buenos, Bulacan. Reception was at Villa Mikaella Resort, San Rafael, Bulacan. Photography was by Dan S. Villar of Primelapse Digital, San Ildefonso. The bride's hair and makeup by Thomie Cruz of Salon 32 Venus.

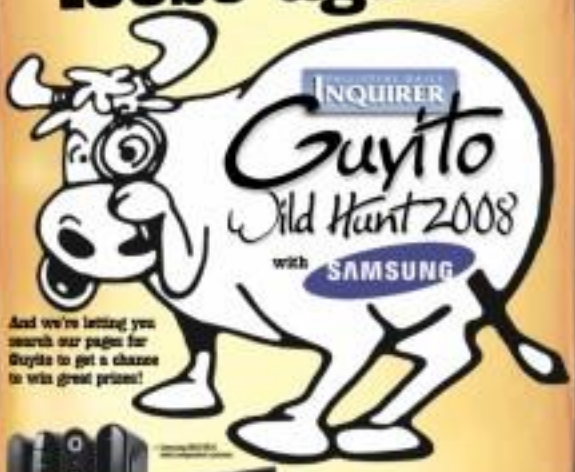
LEE-UO

Neal Adam Lee and Michelle Lorraine Uo will exchange vows on Sept. 28 at St. Stephen's Parish. Reception will be held on I Esplanade. The bride's gown was designed by Tina Liong of New Styles.

CRUZ-PIO

Raymund A. Cruz, son of Ramon and Paz Ma. Cruz fled the knot with Marianne Grace D. Pio, daughter of Fe-Roberto and Dean Mario Linda Pio last Aug. 9 at the San Antonio de Padua Church in Lian, Batang, Cavite. The Mass was officiated by Fr. Willie Layel-lan, O.S.F. Reception followed at Presidentas, Nasugbu, Batangas. The bride's gown was designed by Abet Alvarez and Hawed by Miles Hilarios of Mesdis Flowers.

We've turned Guyito loose again!



And we're letting you search our pages for Guyito to get a chance to win great prizes!

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Find the special Guyito coupon in every Inquirer issue to join the raffle.

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World's top winemakers featured in Toast 2008

WINEMAKERS FROM ALL over the globe arrived in Manila to participate in Toast 2008, the Philippines' largest wine and food festival held yesterday.

The SBC Tent at the Fort hosted this year's festival of flowing wine and food from winemakers and vineyard representatives from New Zealand, Germany, Chile, Italy, France, South Africa, Australia and the United States.

Food from Manila's top hotels and restaurants was featured along with deli items such as chocolates, cheeses, meats, pasta and oils.

This year's event also included the first Chili Challenge where guests sampled some of the hottest chilli peppers on the planet.

Wilson Coffee featured coffee art over frothy cappuccinos, and guests were invited to participate in "cupping" Arabica and Robusta blends to learn how experts distinguish their choice in finer grounds.

Representative wineries include Castillo Real, Cape Jaffa Wines, Great Range Wines, Oriol Sparkling Wines, Houghton Wines, Rosemount, Blackstone Winery, Steenbrechter, Barrack Street, Bella's Wines, Angove's Wines, Nicolas Feuillatte Champagnes, Bernida, Villa Maria Wines, House of Stobbs, Bouchilla Wines, St. Hallett, Deakhorn, Domaine Saint Prive et Fils, Chateau Sainte Marie, Thienpont, Fritzbach, Duval Leroy, Cervera, De Loozen, Chateau Sainte Marie and Weingut de Bene Rosel.

Hotel and Restaurant facilities include Hyatt Hotel and Casino Manila, Makati Shangri-La, Crowne Plaza, Holiday Inn, Renaissance Hotel Manila, Dusit Thani Manila, Dusit, Inda Bistro, 10 Cafe, Kai, Cascamayo, Hero Quisumbing, Tuna and Quiapo.

Also exhibiting are Silver Swizzel, Nestlee, Epatlik, Santa Vittoria Water and Purple Goat.

Master classes were held, featuring a tasters class by Dr. Hubert Strobach, titled "Tribunals: The Legend of Masters, and Biodynamic Wines by Derek Hooper of Cape Jaffa.

Toast 2008 also hosted Wine Depot's largest sale of the year. Call 8894869.

MATT Tolbert, Jack Tolbert and Rob Giordano at last year's Toast

RED CROSS Lady Cindy Yang, Linda Yu, Red Cross Lady Salome Uy, Ruby Chua and Alberik Tu

LONG-TIME friends Rosa Alindogan and Emily Pennarola, with kids Dorbaina and Danielle. Red Cross Lady Tessa Alindogan and Leo Bilegan

RED CROSS Lady Annette Tirol, Prussia Magalona, Sea Princess, HSBC ladies Johanna Garcia and Cat Manese and Red Cross Lady Marilen Aviles

VOLVO president Albert Arolla

Ollie Estrada, Marc and Tessa Abbass, with Arlo Estrada and family photo by Jun Quo

From page 47

Goodbye, saddlebags and 'puson'!

one night only, Camera Club of the Philippines photo exhibit held at the Trinoma luxury showroom in the Pen.

The Mister for Red Photo Exhibit featured very few key private personalities, mostly captured or featured by me, who have their photographs taken by the expert members of the Camera Club of the Philippines (www.cameraclub.ph). More than half of them offered to just make a donation rather than subject themselves to the camera's lenses. But happily all heeded the family and solo photo session for the good of the Red Cross.

Red, black and white

In celebration of the Camera Club's 80th anniversary, Photos For Red shows until the labors of their master lensmen, as they interpreted various themes, all in black and white with a red element thrown in. Canon Philippines generously sponsored the developing and printing of the awesome photographs.

It all started with a phone call to Camera Club's former president, Leo Bilegan. Leo is a wellspring of ideas, after current club president Raoul Lihtana gave the go-signal, the Fine Camera Club team flew to Tacloban City, where we photographed our first set of ladies, including former first lady Imelda Marcos and succeeding ex-

CAMERA Club of the Philippines member and Visions for Red exhibit ladies Tweety Gonzales, Sea Princess and Cris Albers, at the Tribe Tavern

RED CROSS Lady Candy Dizon and daughters Jacqueline and Judy

RED CROSS Lady Kitty Qua, daughters Marsha and Mandy and Hamlet Benitez

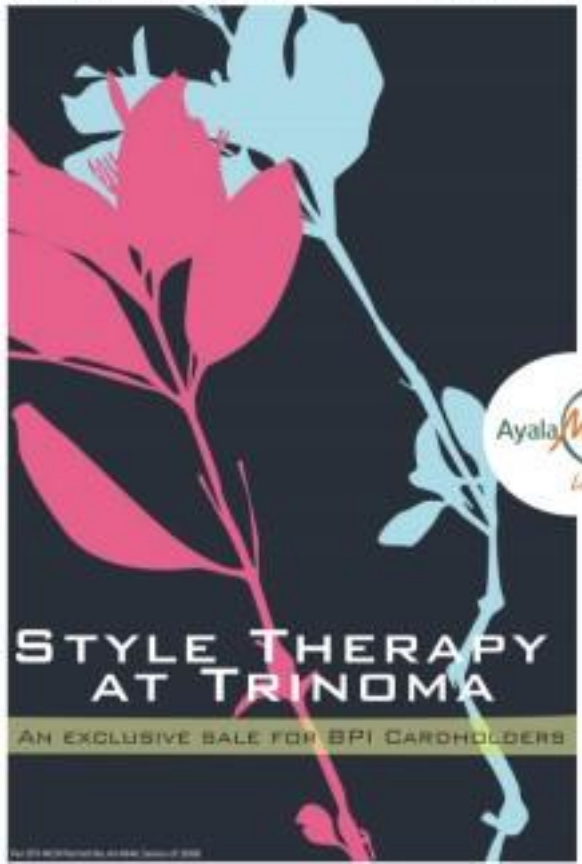
ROBINSONS Land's Jong Dela Torre and Ad Co.

TOAST to Makati Red Cross with Leo Bilegan, El Nido Resorts PR Ayeh Gina Cuneo head Mon Arboleda, Bristol Myers, HSBC's Chris Bourke and Marivic Bulfon of Makati Red Cross

RED CROSS Lady Imelda Marcos, Gardner Museum and two Princesses — Sea Princess Isenia Fausto Princess Iris Fernandez-Berg

VISIONS for Red photo exhibit with trousseau carrying framed black-and-white photos

RED CROSS Ladies Marissa Concepcion and Raye Tinga, Vina Monasterio and Lika Tesoro



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YOUNGTS Lyn Ibarra and husband Erick with family photo by Boy Cruz

GRACIOUS hosts Amb. Benjamin "Kokoy" Romualdez and wife Jules

HEADSES Boss Royal Couple Grace and Felix Ang

YOUTH Gov. Bong-Bong Marcos and wife Liza and Tacloban Mayor Alfred Romualdez

RED CROSS Lady Kat Lim and friend Nicole N'Heuvelmans with family photo by Arnaud Castro

From page E3

Goodbye, saddlebags and 'puson'!

daughter-in-law Lira Armeria-Marcos.

Each photograph has a wonderful, behind-the-scenes story to tell. It was indeed a case of thousands that included thumbs upsons, the sweet bide of Tacloban, Ronald McDonald, a beautiful libretion handy named Jaime and a real, life princess, Princess Ida Parrtenberg, who graced the event.

Friendship, the passion for photography and the love of philanthropy bonded all that participated in this awesome project. Making a small contribution to society has left a remarkable impact on us all. Gob pens Hamel noted that it was fitting that the club partnered with the Red Cross, as club member Francis Magalona was diagnosed with a curable leukemia. Indeed, all our love, blood donations and prayers go to you, Francis! Be well!

Sponsors, supporters

Robinsons Land Corporation was our major sponsor. It hosted Visions For Bed at

FDI CHAIR Florie Prieto and Dr. Tipsi Pascual

DESIGNER Raja Laurel with the Maidenform Phenix

VISION Lipstick of Sea Princess with photographer Raul Montilla; dog owner Cecile Que and Snuzzo

CAMERA Club member Paul Yan, Ali Uy, CCP president Raoul Limcaoo and Red Cross Lady Sabrina Uy

the showroom of their newest tri-tower project at the Fort, the Trion Towers. The photos are gone, but the showroom is still a great visit, showcasing the well-appointed interiors and displaying the endless possibilities of the spacious units.

Robes supported the project as well and had the all-new MINI SC 70-an display at the entrance. Volvo president, Albert Arrillo, has been a generous friend throughout these years, so supportive of my charities including my Sunnyspikes/SCYL Foundation. Volvo UP for marketing, Lyn Ibarra, was one of the 41 stars ladies.

Aside from Robinsons Land, Canon and Volvo, the other sponsors were Globe Platinum and Soap Opera. Special thanks also go to HSBC, Mercedes Benz, El Nido Resorts, Mandarin Oriental Hotel, Moet & Chandon, Belvedere Vodka, Cebu Light, Absolut, Swatch and Urban Spa. Our media sponsors were Preserve Ever Beyond and Philippine Star, truly a unique cooperative venture for both!

Among the highlights of the night were 40+ supermodels-pumped! Sponsors used as frame-bearers. Each carried the gigantic frames of the solo photos with small cuts and effect.

The Makati Red Cross was there in full force to receive the P1 million donation from all the fundraisers. Francis director Madrilo Bellaw was very grateful on behalf of the Red Cross's newest branch. She said the funds would help the Red Cross deliver services, including disaster management, safety services, blood banking, community health, training, and social services.

Visions For Bed will be exhibited for another week starting Sept. 8, at the side lobby of Makati Shangri-La Hotel. Top photographer Arnel Murillo and the project team, including Cha Hamilong and Brian Kinney, will work again with Canon for the processing and developing of the solos of these charitable ladies.

Visions For Bed and Rain Red are two great thoughts to keep in mind this milestone weekend. I'm in my mid-forties and everything is trending up and sweet!

E-mail the author at susperinson@inquirer.com.ph

Sunday LIFESTYLE Travel

Surfing dudes lead beach cleanup

VOLUNTEERS come to clean up beaches.

By Anne A. Jardaneva

IT'S THE SAN JUAN, LA UNION state of mind. When a bunch of surf aficionados decided to help clean up their playground (boomlies last year, the entire surfing community said mountainlay got stoked, so to speak.

Nine months ago, four surfers decided to begin picking up litter from the shores of San Juan beach. They "recruited" other surfers to join in their effort to clean up the shores by walking green marks on their faces from a stick of green-colored sunscreen.

When garbage was collected, they realized there were no trash bins around. When they brought in the trash bins, they learned they needed a garbage truck to collect all the rubbish.

Calling their group Green Zinc, they tied up with the La Union Surf club and the local government to realize beach green or pick up trash on the beach.

"It's an awareness, a state of mind. We don't have membership per se, anyone who cleans up the beach is supporting our cause," said Chris Sullivan, Green Zinc board member.

Not that the locals were unwilling. Sullivan said that as soon as the trash bins were setup the local community just naturally began making use of them. Without being asked, they jumped in to help Green Zinc in their weekly beach-cleaning projects.

Sullivan said the local community understands the significance of the cause, but there was no coherent

> Green Zinc leads anti-litter campaign in San Juan, La Union

turn. "Once you provide the infrastructure, people just do their share," he said.

With over 100 supporters, Green Zinc was able to bring in a garbage truck.

The garbage truck, in fact, is what driven by the barangay captains just to make sure the community picks up the beach trash two to three times per week, Sullivan said.

Vivi Olalia, another Green Zinc board member, said garbage collected from the beach is mostly brought in by tourists who only visit San Juan on weekends to surf.

Trash bins have been placed along the beaches of Barangay San Juan and Tabtoc towns. A mobile team of 30-40 Green Zinc supporters, clad in Green Zinc tees, combs the beaches every Friday to collect rubbish.

"It's not about who does it first, it's about what it gets done. And we're doing this hand in hand with the local government," Sullivan said.

Water cleanup

Green Zinc is now embarking on a project to clean the water by installing and repairing public toilets and setting up liquid-waste purification units.

The new project is set to be completed by yearend. Green Zinc partnered with Australian surf brand Golden Breed and Californian brand Hurley. Both brands are known to top surfers around the world, they're also known for their commitment to the environment.

If anything, Olalia said, the community projects have fostered community fellowship. Inspired by the outpouring of support, Green Zinc plans to expand its projects to Siargao and other surfing communities in the country.

Green Zinc T-shirts are available for P600 at Ben Hur Street Bonifacio, The Roti, and at the 3rd Surf Shop on Kamputan Ave., QC. Twenty percent of the proceeds will go to the projects of Green Zinc.

"We are one with Green Zinc in their vision to keep San Juan and its environs clean, and help strengthen its canon among top surfing destinations in the Philippines," said Golden Breed and Hurley brand manager Fatty Palma.

Golden Breed apparel and surfboards are available at Ben Hur Street Bonifacio, The Roti, SM Department Store, Shoe Salon; Ben/Tim Wan, Pitchoplay, Chocolate Clothing, Lonely Planet Boracay, and Wetshop.

Vote Tubbataha for 7 wonders of nature

PALAWAN'S TUBBATAHA Reefs is surging upward in the search for the top seven natural sites of the world.

With the support coming from Filipinos especially Palaweños, Tubbataha Reefs ranks No. 8 as of press time with Bohol's Chocolate Hills as No. 9 and Puerto Princesa Subterranean River National Park at No. 10. Voting will end on the last day of December 2008. Among the 77 natural sites nominated, the panel of experts will select the top 21 natural sites for another round of voting process in 2009.

From this, the top seven and official list of the new seven wonders of nature will be announced in 2011.

Located in Cagayancillo, Palawan, Tubbataha is the Philippines' only National Marine Park declared a World Heritage Site by Unesco in 1993.

TUBBATAHA is the only marine World Heritage Site in Southeast Asia today.

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BANANA REPUBLIC 30
THREE UNFORGETTABLE DECADES

CITIBANK officers flank winner Jaime Izgarra and his wife during the award presentation. From left: relationship manager Sheila Jeremia, retail banking director Agnes Deades, area head Luis Simonarriaza and Batjonnal branch manager Marita Bartolome

Citibank Savings depositor takes off for Mexico's Chichen Itza

WHEN JAIME IZGARRA, A 36-YEAR-OLD entrepreneur from Pasig City, set foot inside the Citibank Savings branch in Eastwood, Quezon City, January of this year, he never thought he'd get more than just a warm welcome at a new customer of the bank.

"I was encouraged to open an account with Citibank Savings because I wanted to experience the personalized service my wife, who's a loyal customer, has been talking about. I never expected that I'd win something; all I was after was security for my savings," related Jaime, who runs a trading company importing chemical and agricultural products.

Jaime is one of the six winners of the recently concluded raffle promotion that gave new and existing depositors of Citibank Phils. and Citibank Savings the chance to fly to visit famed tourist destination around the world while letting their money earn the highest possible interest.

Jaime opened a Time Deposit Plus account, the new high-yielding deposit product from Citibank and Citibank Savings. The entrepreneur was attracted by the competitive interest rates of the new product, one of the best offers, if not the highest, in the market. "I didn't want to deposit with any bank because I feel safer with Citibank and the Time Deposit Plus product offered interest rate within the range of what I was hoping to earn for my money" explained Jaime.

Just by opening a Time Deposit Plus account, Jaime received raffle coupons to the promotion. While he was ecstatic with the possibility of traveling to any one of the eight destinations, Jaime wasn't really expecting he'd win. That's why when he received the call a month and a half ago informing that he was one of the winners of second-trip tokens plus 6-day, 5 night accommodations he free to his destination of choice, Jaime couldn't believe the wonderful news.

"I was very excited! My wife and I are used to cruises from Citibank, but this one is definitely big!" shared Jaime.

For his prize, Jaime chose the Chichen Itza in Mexico, the famous Mayan pyramids located in the Yucatan Peninsula, which are over 1,500 years old. Jaime can't wait to explore the famous Mayan ruins, which was the center of political, economic, religious and military power not only in Yucatan but also in the entire southeastern part of Mesoamerica.

"Of course I'm going with my wife, because if not for her encouragement to open an account with Citibank Savings, I won't be able to experience this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity," said Jaime.

For more information on Citibank Phils. and Citibank Savings products and ongoing promotions, log on to www.citibank.com.ph or visit the branch nearest you.

Best escapes and thrills in travel fair

By Margie Baga-Reyes

TRAVEL BUFFS SHOULD brace themselves for great travel and holiday escapades in the 19th annual Philippine Travel Mart Sept. 12-14 at SM Megamall's Mega Trade Hall, Mandaluyong City.

Dubbed "Triple E: Exotic Adventure, Extreme Wellness and Serene Leisure in the Philippines," the travel fair showcases packages featuring the Philippines' great outdoor activities such as surfing, rafting, sailing, banging on a 30-ft. bridge and trekking the jungles to commune with the world's rarest birds.

So, you can experience the thrill of exploring the country's wild side in the three-day travel mart, the foremost exposition for Philippine travel, tourism, culture and lifestyle. Organized by the Philippine Tour Operators Association (Philtoa) with the Department of Tourism, the fair focuses on adventure travel that attracts the public's growing taste for extreme trails and recreation.

"We wanted to promote the Philippines as an adventure destination," said Cesar Cruz, president of Philtoa and chair of this year's travel mart. "The expectation is designed specifically for the domestic market as the international tourism. You see, there's still a lot to discover in our own land—from bird-watching in Cebu to spelunking in Bohol, volcano-crater kayaking in Sorsogon to rush and recreation.

19th Philippine Travel Mart focuses on extreme outdoor highs

EXPERIENCE taking in Banaue.

Culinary and Baking Secrets Unveiled at the F&B World Annual Summit

Best escapes and thrills in travel fair

WILL-CURVING in Cantabacos, Cebu

From page F1

Dinamitos, caves cubing in Kidapawan and rappelling in Cagayan de Oro."

Cruz said domestic tourism is breaking new grounds. The signs of developments are energizing the industry. Last year's travel mart has yielded significant domestic tourism interest from the public.

"Many years ago, the Filipino traveler would only go to places where he or she has family, or known someone who can be a host or a tour guide," Cruz explained. "But now, the tour packages at the travel mart have made it possible for us to go overseas, even to places where we don't know anyone."

"All of us are marketers of this country," said Tourism Secretary Ace Durano, who throws his full support behind the travel mart. "The Philippines is heaven because there are so many things that we can package and sell as a tourism product.

"If you want an urban experience, this is part of it. You go to Makati or SM Mall of Asia area. If you want nature-based activity, visit Cebu and Davao. If you want traditions and culture, every region and province has something to contribute. From a marketer's point of view we can never run out of products. It's a matter of one's perspective and how to package it."

This year's exhibitors include tour operators, airlines, spas, hotels and resorts, all representing the country's 17 regions. Their exhibits will be housed in beautifully designed pavilions.

Travel Mart offers discounted airline tickets and package tours exclusive to the three-day event. Last year's biggest draw was the Sale ng Bayan, which sold one-way airline tickets for P1$ pesos in each Travel Mart's 10th year. This year, you can design your own travel and adventure any begin-ning with a P19 Sale ng Bayan airline ticket or an evening offer of Boy Oro, Take Ten tour packages.

"The Travel Mart has always been a venue for introducing new travel products," Durano said. "I'm excited this year because we will be featuring innovative tour packages for adventurous travelers. In a way, this is a world preview of sorts because what we will be launching here will also be launched internationally thereafter. We will take it to France, Russia and New England."

TOURISM Sec. Ace Durano supports the 14th Philippine Travel Mart headed by Omar Cruz.

Meet passionate souls at the "Home of Passionate Minds"

Mug shots

Albert Land president Dan Alvarez

Contractor Chino Tolosa

Spotted at Bonifacio Global City were passionate souls – jewelry designer Ana Rocha, Mac Salido Albert Daencia, chef Rolando Laudico, Alvarez Land president Dan Alvarez, conductor Chino Tolosa and artist Reg Yason. And why shouldn't they be there?

They are the passionate souls who enjoy living, working, playing, and yes, taking their coffee at Bonifacio Global City.

It's not yet time to get your own dose of caffeine. Join Coffee Hop, which lets you hop from the participating coffee shops in BGC. A completed coffee hop card gets you to own the limited-edition mug with artwork of National Artist Ben Cab, and join the rest of the city in celebrating the passion for coffee. Coffee Hop runs till Sept. 30. Coffee Hop cards are available in participating coffee shops.

Mac Salido, Albert Daencia

Jewelry designer Ana Rocha

Chef Rolando Laudico

Artist Reg Yason

HIPHINE Cojuangco, Ina, Ani Macapagal, Steve Henderson

For the duration of the games, everybody was an equal. Everyone was an Olympian who deserved to share the stage with the Michael Phelps's and the Usain Bolt's of the world

WILLY Wong, Mary Jane Kolmar, William "Butch" Ramirez and Peping Cojuangco

My Olympic experience

By Pin Cojuangco-Guingona
Contributor

LET ME FIRST SAY THAT I have never been a big sports fan. When I was growing up, it was my older sister Lisa who was into competitive bonding. Minor runs alternated with equestrian, Mid-Mid and China played football. I was, therefore, the unlikely choice to accompany my dad Cesar "Peping" Cojuangco, Philippine Olympics Committee chief, to Beijing to attend the just concluded Summer Games.

I have to admit I was a bit reluctant to leave my family behind and cloud with the fear of in-flight turbulence. But, as soon as I got to Beijing, I knew it would be an experience I would treasure forever.

Item one on our agenda was to find Archer and Rebecca, our Italian athletes. They were English-speaking university students, our guides.

We then met up with our constant companions for the next 18 days, Steve Henderson and Ani Macapagal.

Beijing was ablaze with activity as the opening ceremonies neared. The energy was infectious.

Once the games began, timetables were tight and schedules rigid, mostly because I wanted to watch everything... the Philippine athletes in trap, archery, swimming, diving and boxing. I didn't want to miss the tennis and basketball, too.

I was so awe-struck seeing so many athletes in various venues. I was so impressed with their dedication, focus and performance.

The whole experience ran like clockwork. Since I'm no athlete, this was all so new to me. I could feel the intensity in all the venues. The Olympic spirit permeated the proceedings.

We visited the Olympic Village where Team Philippines was billeted. Never is war so awesome complex. But why shouldn't it be? The people staying there were the best athletes, along with their coaches, trainers, doctors etc. They had to be comfortable!

Some of the athletes were just hanging out by the garden, others strolling or biking around, some exercising, jogging, while some were conserving their energy by riding the shuttle bus to get from one place to another.

OLYMPIC torch

Village shopping

Just as I was very overwhelmed already, Mitch Joseph and Illarde Camara took me to other areas in the village.

First stop was the souvenir shop. Yes! Shopping! There there was the dining area where all kinds of food were served 24/7. It was so big that the McDonalds inside looked small. Unbelievable!

But as I entered, I didn't care about the food. I was looking for Federica, Shalai, Fraiswick, the US Basketball team, etc. Too bad they were not there.

Maybe in the gym. Again, amazing! It was fully equipped with all the newest state-of-the-art equipment, and good-looking athletes.

THE AUTHOR with her father, Ani Macapagal and Steve Henderson

The entertainment area had video games, ballet, air hockey and DVD movie stations, plus a live band. I heard there was even a pastor where athletes got their buzz and walk-ins.

The Beijing Olympic committee really did a great job. Everything in the village was pretty comfortable, clean, and most important, free!

For the duration of the games, all athletes were regarded as equals. Respect was given to all those who participated. It did not matter where one hailed from. Everyone was an Olympian, an Olympian who deserved to share the stage with the Michael Phelps's and the Usain Bolt's of the world. Just competing was reason enough to be filled with personal and national pride.

Simply put, I was given a glimpse of what the Olympics are all about. As cliché as it may sound, it did not matter if one won or lost. What mattered most is how one played the game.

Team Philippines may not have garnered medals, except for Hidilyn, an exhibition sport) but the lives of the Filipino Olympians have forever changed by this experience.

It was mine. Now I look at everybody more especially my kids, and hope that one day they will have the same, or even a portion, of an athlete's passion.

The extraordinary knight China went in in preparing for the games truly overwhelmed me. But beyond all that, I came away from the Beijing Games with a deeper understanding of the language of the games: One World, One Dream. In the sense that in sports, we are equals among peers.

HIDILYN Diaz

PHILIPPINE CONTINGENT on parade during opening ceremonies

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo with Philippine sports officials

ARCHER Mark Jamie

ESTIMAR, Benjie Alvaro, Hidilyn Mariano, Willy Wong, Julian Camacho and Peping Cojuangco

INA, the author, Rebecca and Archer

IN THE MORNING (l-r, seated from left): Percy Sanz, Lolita Padgett, Hamilton Flores, Gloria Bello, Marina Milanes Sanchez; (standing) Ruben Velasco, Eddie Un, Belinda Velayo, Rose Picos, Linda Tan, Becky Oracion, Tony Lu, Rudy Fuentes and Macky Zosobe

Engineering class holds 40th reunion

CEBU CEBU
Jaime Piccarrel

THE CHEMICAL ENGINEERING Class of 1968 at the Cebu Institute of Technology held a reunion at Tambuli beach resort to celebrate a memorable Ruby Jubilee (40 years).

Some of them have been in touch with each other all these years, while others haven't. The research and remaining paid off. Many turned up for the two-day celebration.

Norma Sanchez was at the forefront of the merriment. It started with a mass by Rev. Fr. Myron Cosico, OAD, and for the rest of the day, it was fun, fun, fun at the beach. A special guest was Rudy Fuentes, back in 1968 127"s King of Beginners.

Cathy Gamil and Jessebel Opao made sure everything was up-top. More than anything else, the gathering was for bonding, updating and catching up on each other. Also for networking...connections, formalities, experiences, professors' quirks and love-ones.

Almost and absentees came from Manila, Tantoongo, nearby Mandaue and Leyte, and also from afar, such as Taiwan, USA and Australia. They compared notes, showed photos of children and grandchildren, and took opportunity to lose gracefully they had "aged."

The Reshing Rubies, as they called themselves on this jubilee year, proved their agility and drive by singing, dancing and even swimming. "For them hold enough to burn," said Norma.

Now, they're thinking of making a yearly celebration all the way up to the 50th anniversary. They've already scored to get it to.

VENDORS in the vibrant Pettah market

THE VICTORIAN splendor of the old Parliament (foreground) stands comfortably with the facade of its much younger neighbors—the 5-star Galadari Hotel and the steel-and-glass Bank of Ceylon and World Trade Center towers beyond

With luxurious hotels, niche villas, fine crafts, museums, it's modern life with colonial charm

Colombo:
One of the best-kept secrets in the east

By Glenn Galo
Contributor

THE CAPITAL CITIES OF paradise destinations, such as Sri Lanka, are not places where the visiting traveler yearning for quality sand, sea and sunshine time is inclined to hang around for too long.

But Colombo, Sri Lanka's capital and largest city, is a candidate to buck that trend, what with its bright mosaic of vibrant modern life fused with understated colonial charm. It is blessed with the recognizable sensors of the Indian Ocean so decidedly lining the shores of its seaward flank and providing the perfect backdrop to wonder the streets and sup the finest food.

It is rewarded the city's historical lineage going back centuries, the Romans, Arabs and Chinese seen very early visitors, but it was the comparatively later arrivals—the Portuguese, Dutch and British—who left lasting cultural, social and spiritual imprints that endure to this day.

And what picture-postcard contrasts are showing up by comparison Colombo, be, north of the city seems to be battling four business towers with its mix-and-match architecture of Victorian is back backed by when the country was part of the British Empire) and glass and steel modernism, to the south the Galle Face Green endures its encroaching or jogging (or even swimming or frolicking on the frothy waves of seaweed below) it is delightful way of kind life; and to the east the Pettah Bazaar district where the lively sights and sounds are as sharp as the circulating aromas!

MOORISH architecture in the heart of the city

If you are interested in getting up close and personal with Sri Lanka's cultural heritage, then Colombo is a great starting point. Several museums and art galleries host eloquent testimony to this beautiful island's rich historical past, and resonate with memories of bygone eras.

The Colombo National Museum, Sri Lanka's premier museum, is a grand white-walled colonial building that houses many of the island's historical treasures, such as 4000-year-old archaic palm-leaf manuscripts, rock sculptures from ancient provincial cities and the royal regalia of Sri Lankan kings.

Follow that with a visit to the Natural History Museum and the Dutch Period Museum, and you would have digested an almost complete dose of the island nation's historical facts in one full swoop.

Despite the negative vibes created in the past two decades as a result of the sectarian strife in the north of the country, Sri Lanka is touted for both its ethnic and religious diversity. These positive elements can be spotted in many parts of Colombo where marbled mosques, decorative Hindu temples, domed Buddhist temples and grand spired churches sit in spiritual juxtaposition—and often on the same street corner.

Enjoy Sri Lanka's "Six Tourisms" ...from Harrison de Abrew of the Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority

"Colombo is, indeed, one of the best-kept secrets in the east and it's time the world knew about it. It's a destination with contrasts and that is what makes it so exciting."

Best hotels

The city is also home to some of the best hotels in Sri Lanka, ranging from the Galadari, Taprobane, Hilton Turkish celebrated its 22nd year in business in Colombo by leading the first 21 babies born after the stroke of 2008 to the city's leading university hospital and Cinnamon Grand to the modern and luxurious five-star category to the grandiose period charm of the 150-year-old Galle Face Hotel and Mount Lavinia Hotel.

Then there is the exciting new development of niche offers such as the Colombo House, Casa Colombo and the Ganga Ehelepola has the distinction of being the former home of three of the country's prime ministers) which provide delightful contrasts to their five-star cousins. Of the three, Casa Colombo bills itself as "retro-chic" and really lives up to the boast with a great swimming pool.

Colombo also has attractive hotel-made leather products, brass-ware and local crafts that can be found in centre boutiques like the famed Ishanka to ITC's "Lovely Planet") Paradise Road, Barefoot Gallery and Lakshmidas that are dotted around the metropolis.

THE COLONIAL facade of the Colombo Town Hall is a green oasis (above left)

Night life

The city is also known to come alive and kicking after dark as Sri Lankans love to party on any given night. One of the most popular nightspots is Tramps Inn, as in the legendary London nightspot, or the Galadari where you can sip inventive cocktails and dance the night away alongside Colombo's beautiful people.

Incidentally, the 500-room Galadari ...where the general manager is accomplished Sri Lankan hotelier Sampath Siriwardena with almost three decades of sterling experience with some of the best known global hotel brands—is rugged as the "businessman's home to Colombo".

Embrace Sustainability: "To get a real taste of our famous Sri Lankan hospitality you have to experience it. Here at Galadari Hotel we have everything in place to offer our guests that experience like no other."

Colombo is a key element in the tourism master plan of Minister Ali Abeysekera, regarded as one of the best tourism brains in Asia-Pacific, having also served in the 1990s as vice president (Asia) of the Pacific Asia Travel Association.

He explains: "The current challenge, as it has been in the past 30 years, is to manage tourism in a social-political environment that is not optimal to supporting tourists. Despite that Sri Lanka tourism has done extremely well to stay on top of things.

"Today the challenge is to set its plans, policies and strategies to manage tourism in a post peace scenario.

"Our current platform is on an 'Earth Luring' where we are working toward making Sri Lanka a carbon-clean destination to contribute to the global effort in mitigating climate change. We are making a proactive leadership role in this area."

Plan your US trip online

Or be surprised with stringent new rules at airports

Text and photos by
Alex T. Vergara

SHOPAHOLIC FILIPINOS on a cross-country trip of the United States are left with only two choices these days: either travel light and ferry the goodies in one checked-in luggage (which is almost sure to unpossible) or pay a $125 fee on their second piece of checked-in bag.

And should any of their suitcases or boxes exceed the 50-lb limit, over by just one seemingly inconsequential pound, they must be ready to fork up at least $50 on the spot.

As if these recently implemented rules weren't enough, a number of US carriers are even poised to charge passengers for every single piece of checked-in luggage on domestic flights anytime soon. No exceptions.

The irony of this development wasn't lost on a number of delegates to the recent International Pow Wow held in Las Vegas, Nevada.

Just when Roger Dow, president and CEO of America's Travel Industry Association (TIA), trumpeted the good news that inbound tourism to the US has begun to exceed pre-9/11 figures, US airlines have resorted to every imaginable means to weaken the effect of rising fuel prices. And guess who's bearing the brunt of such measures.

Dealing one of several headaches, Dow also announced the expansion of America's visa-waiver program beyond the current 27 countries, to include South Korea and several European Union nations.

The news was a step further to urge the government to include Brazil, a developing country with a booming economy, to the list. No mention was made of the Philippines.

"Our to-right Americans is to foster easy employed in the travel industry," said Dow. "We've got this feeling of the US economy called travel and tourism, which is a $740-billion industry."

THE "BRIDE" of Las Vegas, one of the reasons Pow Wow and America's so-called wedding capital

Room for growth

There's still plenty of room for growth. And this can only be achieved, said Dow, by being more proactive. In fact, America, a supposed leader in marketing and technology, has acknowledged the need to compete more aggressively with its rivals in terms of tourism promotion.

For starters, TIA, in cooperation with the US Commerce Department, recently unveiled Discoveramerica.com, a new and improved website to promote the country to overseas travelers.

Frankly, the old site (brandusa.org) didn't have enough funds and information behind it," said Dow. "This time we have nearly $4 million from the Commerce Department and that really allows us to begin to build a first-class, massive website that works the way the consumer thinks."

And, for that matter, speaks. Apart from English, the site has Japanese, Spanish, German and French versions. It also goes well beyond focusing on the usual places such as New York, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Chicago, Miami, Orlando and Las Vegas, to include quaint and little known tourist attractions and establishments.

"Beyond these places, a whole lot is not known about what makes up the US, including the wonders," said Dow. "The onus is now also on the government and politics. You need to consider all these things in planning a tourism, and this site provides you with all sorts of tools to do this."

To make it a truly one-stop shopping experience, the site also has links names to travel experts within their markets that they can talk to.

Who knows? If economic Filipinos search hard enough, they could probably even discuss upon reputable forwarders that would help them ship across shopping finds more cheaply than the airlines.

POW WOW '08, the biggest gathering of travel industry people in the US.

TRAVEL Industry Association chair Richard Dow

Hangout place for family and friends

ALABANG TOWN CENTER (ATC) features A wide array of restaurants al fresco style and an improved food court. As ATC general manager Carol T. Mills describes it, "Food Choices at the Town is not your typical mall food court. It's a hangout place for family and friends."

Food Choices boasts of modern lighting fixtures, new cave-ized booths and comfortable lounge seating. Partnering with Coca-Cola Bottler's Philippines Inc., Food Choices also now provides free WiFi access and charging stations available for all its customers.

Dine in or bring home delectable dishes from Bake Bake, Chowking, Gerry King, Ibanggo Grill, Italiani Express, Kimchi, Magic Wok, Mom Sarah House, Mogu, Ramen's of Gangnai, Reyes Barbeque, Tokyo Tokyo, Tsuta Town, Yellow Cab and President's Tea House.

Office workers can grab a quick bite at Hamcorn's Burgers, Pacific Thins, Germanhamburger, Tendere Noodles and Soup.

Tsuta, on the other hand, can enjoy snacks at Potato Corner, Eddy's Chicharon Bapaypay, Old Tom Rice, and Corn Magnet, and sweets from Ice Monster, Coconut Republic, Fruit Magic and Nestle Ice Cream.

Desserts are available at Tita Lynn's Flavored Siomai, Bit Bi Delights, House of Siomai, Hungry Bee, Megamelt Frozenyogurt and Goodbites.

Food Choices at the Town is on the second level of the Activity Center.

REYES Barbecue at Food Choices grills meat and seafood to perfection.

ALABANG Town Center's newly renovated Food Choices

Who is Johannsen G. Ang?

You may see him walking along the streets of Singapore taking in the aroma of fresh ingredients and spices being prepared for bustling kitchens. With Singapore's Malay, Chinese and British influences, the city state has become a fusion of all things spicy, sweet, salty and sour—a veritable melting pot of flavours that has inspired its year-old dining establishments to keep its take-up the culinary education here.

"The possibilities are limitless. If we amaze and excite my every time—take a perfectly cooked classical dish or a discover a new taste or a new ingredient," Johannsen shares.

In 2006, upon the recommendation of a close friend, he moved to Singapore to study culinary arts at the At Sunrise Global Chef Academy. The course aims to produce world-class chefs by exposing students to a rich culture of Europe, Western, Old World and New World cuisines, as well as teaching them to explore the magic of the new tastes and spices to achieve a consistency of flavors. The culinary academy is a 20,000 square meter facility that boasts of three wine cellars, a baking school, Asian and Western galleys, and gourmet facilities to enhance learning.

The chef-to-be's high quality standards and towering enormity kept him inspired to achieve culinary excellence. He also enjoys exploring Singapore's restaurant and malls in Clarke Quay, the shopping malls in Orchard Road, Sentosa island as well as the museums and other historical attractions around the city. Moving around is easy thanks to Singapore's efficient transport system," he adds.

Recalling his best memories as a student in Singapore, Johannsen marvels at the impressive range of cuisines available, from traditional Asian to Classical European. "It is still fresh in my mind how I could travel around from sunrise Cafe, Harbour Front, to Orchard Road to taste the first Australian Steak Restaurants, and fine dining restaurant to dual-wine pairings. Of course, a visit to Asian hawker centers is definitely not worth the risk."

His experience in Singapore has not only bolstered his employment qualifications for the world's best dining establishments, it has also sparked in him a renewed love for his native dishes. Johannsen is now back in the Philippines and pursuing his passion to master Filipino cuisine.

"Singapore, as a melting pot of different races, cultures and religions, has opened up my eyes to a lot of possibilities and ideas that I could never have experienced if I studied elsewhere. It also made me more mature in respecting traditions and embracing the modern life."

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Travel Briefs

BORACAY

Complimentary transfers

SOUTHEAST ASIAN AIRLINES (SEAIR) NOW offers complimentary transfers to all its passengers bound for Boracay. VIP service will be accorded to all Seair passengers by club-assigned transfer coordinators upon the plane's landing at Godofredo Ramos Airport in Caticlan on the boat's docking at the Caticlan or Tambisaan Jetty Port or Boracay. At Godofredo Ramos Airport (Caticlan Airport), Seair transfer coordinators will be on hand to assist passengers in claiming their checked-in bags. After collecting all the boarding passes, passengers will be accompanied to a specially marked Seair van to take them to the Caticlan Jetty Port. Land transfer is free of charge. Call 8482100.

SKAL anniversary

Skal International-Makati will host its 21th anniversary celebration, which will coincide with the conferring of the prestigious Tourism Personalities Awards, on Sept. 12 at Manhattan Grandstar Hotel in Makati. Skal Tourism awardees include Chief Justice Art Puigpinos Panis, then president of Baron Travel; Tan Lowe Legends; business tycoon Lucio Tan; mall and resort magnate Henry Sy Sr.; Lance Gokongwei, president of JG Summit Holdings, Inc.; beauty queen Margie Moran Floirendo; former Agriculture Secretary Carlos Dominguez, then connected with Hotilio Capital Resources-Marco Polo Centennial Hotel; Enrique "Enrile" Montilla, Jr., Manila Transport System chief executive officer; Dr. Emilio Yap, chair of Manila Bulletin; Tourism Secretary Joseph Ace Durano; former Philippine Tourism Authority general manager Robert Dean Barbers; Efraim Genuino, chair of the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp.; Rep. Edgar Chatto, chair of the House tourism committee; Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay; Cebu Gov. Gwendolyn Garcia; and Jaime Bautista, Philippine Airlines president and chief operating officer. Call 8333334 to 38 local 204 or 397-5-8000007.

Green Holidays campaign

Talkord International Company, a leading beverage company in Hong Kong, has chosen the Philippines' top ecotourist destinations for the company's yearly campaign called Green Holidays. Talkord's Green Holidays started in 2003 with the aim of taking its consumers to top ecotourist destinations where they can enjoy the beauty of nature and play the role of preservationists. A total of 60 lucky winners to the promotion will be sent on all-expense paid, weeklong vacation to Cresta de Gallo, Bohol, Puerto Princesa, Baracs, Coron and Subic.

Sangria Sundays

Restaurant Verbena of Discovery Country Suites Tagaytay spices up cocktail hour every Sunday with Sangria Sundays. From 5-6 p.m., guests at Restaurant Verbena may avail of unlimited servings of sangrias complemented by platters of cheese and croquettes. Call 4580000 or (046) 4134567.

Precious moments

From birthday parties and get-togethers to dream weddings, The Bellevue Hotel's Grand Ballroom caters to initial venue to compliment such unforgettable moments. Diverse packages and rates are offered to suit your needs, from scrumptious set menus to seating capacities up to 800. Call 7718181.

ENTERTAINMENT

Editor Bonnie G. Velarde

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Judai: I just want to be a good wife and mom

By Rayzel San Diego Jr.
Editorial Assistant

ACTRESS JUDY ANN SANTOS-AGOOTE HIR tax evasion case is one of the reasons that she's holding off her altar date with fiancé Ryan Agoncillo.

She told Inquirer Entertainment on the set of her latest film, Regal's "Ishiq Angel Ka Sa Akin," that she's praying her tax woes will have been resolved by the time she ties the knot with Ryan.

"We weren't a couple yet when that case was first filed against me (in 2005)," she explained. "Ayaw ng mailamay si Ryan (I don't want Ryan to get dragged into this). And I'd rather we start a family with this problem-hounding-me-still."

On her case:

She stressed that she intends to solve the case in her own.

"I make my own decisions," she said. "I don't want to stress out my mom. I don't bother Ryan, either, because he's busy working."

She made it quite clear, "As far as I know, I am not guilty of anything. But whatever is the court's decision, I will accept it."

Last week, the Supreme Court rejected her appeal, but she took this in stride.

"I was down, but only days later we learned that 'Flaming' was being fielded as the country's entry in the Oscar (for Best Foreign Language Film)," she related.

She scored that, for her, "bad news is always followed by good news. "The year has been like a roller coaster ride for me," she said. "If not for my faith, I would have gone crazy!"

She's excited about the buzz surrounding "Flaming," her first venture as producer. "Being chosen to represent the country is an honor enough. It's like we've won already."

She doesn't even consider the fact that "Flaming" edged out "Lastikman," produced by Star Cinema, a rivalmovie.

Leaving ABS-CBN?

Earlier this year, Judai was reportedly slighted because her home network, ABS-CBN, didn't support "Flaming" and instead pinned an...

She opens up about Ryan, her Oscar bid and her tax problem

'Swingtown' tonight on Velvet

"SWINGTOWN" IS A BLAST FROM THE past on the Velvet Channel.

The relationship and period drama peeks into the drug-exposed relentless homes of the 1970s to find couples secretly trying to the sexual and social revolution that invalidated open marriages, championed women's liberation, and challenged conventional wisdom.

In the summer of 1976, during the time of pronounced change, Susan and Bruce Miller move their family into an affluent Chicago suburb in search of a different sense of community as well as a change of pace for their teenage daughter and preteen son.

Sugar and spice

Their neighbors add sugar and spice to their newfound society, including Tom and Trina Decker who have an open marriage, their daughter Laurie who explores her relationship with a summer school Philosophy teacher, and Roger and Janet Thompson, the Millers' more conservative neighbors who are appalled by the Deckers' marriage.

Canadian Molly Parker, who appeared in HBO's "Deadwood" and "Six Feet Under," stars as Susan Miller. Jack Davenport of the "Pirates of the Caribbean" and the the British sitcom "Coupling" plays the role of Bruce Miller, a historic leader and Susan's husband.

Also in the cast are Shanna Collins, Grant Show, Lena Stella, Josh Hopkins, Miriam Shor, Aaron Howker and Brittany Robertson.

According to Variety Magazine, the series "exhibits rare depth and its cladies plenty of edgy touching from the pop-song score and Boogie Nights fashions to the first-rate cast."

Imbra.com adds it "stylish and 70s-sexy but also shallow enough to feel like a less funny, hollowed-out combination of "The Wonder Years" and "Boogie Nights"."

The show premieres tonight at 10, with an encore on Friday at 9:30 p.m.

MOLLY Parker, Jack Davenport, Lana Parrilla and Grant Show

Toronto fest exec hails RP movies

TORONTO, ONTARIO — AS THE VENICE Film Festival winds down, the mass migration from that title to Toronto, which has become an annual rendezvous among many Hollywood folks, is in full swing.

After opening the Middle East, George Clooney, Brad Pitt and their flick "Burn After Reading" have moved on to the Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF) where their comedy is also a main attraction. Joel and Ethan Coen, noteworthy generalist duo gets "No Country for Old Men" near the Oscar first Picture (and a Best Director trophy as well) early this year, returns to comedy with a tale about idiots in Washington, DC.

George, who worked with the Coen brothers in two earlier films, "Intolerable Cruelty" and "O, Brother, Where Art Thou?," said: "Joel and Ethan and I is my only, ugly of idiots. It's the child of the idiots that I've played with them. The only thing that made me feel better was that Brad Pitt is as stupid as I am in this one..."

Screening 'Bayan Ko'

Where Lino Brocka's "Bayan Ko: Kapit sa Patalim" is shown here on Tuesday, Sept. 9, 9:30 p.m. at the Ateneum Hall as part of "Dialogues: Talking with Pictures" section, it is in observance of the 10th death anniversary of Lino's Overbrey, credited as one of the first writers and festival programmers to champion Philippine cinema. Journalist Jose Dayrit, whose 1981 interview with Lino in Manila for Le Monde was arranged by David, will preserve the film which stars Philip Salvador, Gina Alajar, Paquito Diaz and Claudia Zobel.

We learned about the interesting way in which David first saw a Filipino film, Lino's masterpiece, "Insiang," and how he eventually met the late great director, as recounted in a 1996 article by Rito Cabahug for the Manila Times' Sunday Times Magazine.

Discovering 'Insiang'

Here comes: "It was one particularly sunny day in 1978 when the 'accident' happened and the discovery was made. At a small-scale international film festival in Grenoble, France, David was invited to a screening of a French film in a building which had a dozen identical studio-sized rooms. Without looking hard at the number pasted on the door, he crept into one room, plopped himself down a seat, and waited for the screening to begin. Soon enough, the lights were put out and the film began playing. There, reading the film's opening credits, he realized that he was in the wrong room.

"He had read nothing that was in French and the film's title was not what he had expected as one splashed on that particular screen. It was a foreign name in some alien language. Turning, And excited as director was Lino Brocka, somebody he had never heard before.

"Upon the film that eventually began, David decided he'd stay awhile and see what this Brocka guy and his 'Insiang' had to offer. To his delightful surprise, he found himself hooked right away. There he decided to continue watching. The hell with the other film; this is pretty good. (Anne) credits saying in his mind as he was drawn deeper and snared by the 'powerful, wonderful Filipino domestic drama.'

"BRAD Pitt (right) is as stupid as I am in this one," quips George Clooney (center) about his and Brad's characters in "Burn After Reading," a Venice/Toronto comedy entry directed by Ethan (left) and Joel Coen (center).

ONLY IN HOLLYWOOD

Ryben V. Yaptinchay

... and George Clooney says his entry completes 'trilogy of idiots'

Meeting Brocka

"... That initial contact with Filipino cinema would not be followed until a year later when, en route to Australia for a writing job, David's plane stopped over in Manila ... Taiping. Lino Brocka," he recalls thinking. Immediately he told a flight attendant he's getting off and he emailed her to take his luggage off the plane. What happened next was something straight out of a movie. David got off the plane, looked up Lino's name in the phone book, called him, told him urgently who he was, that he had seen 'Insiang,' that he was 'most impressed,' and that he wanted to see him. Brocka came to pick him up at the Manila International Airport, took him to his house where he stayed for two weeks ... as I did year after year," he offers ... and introduced him to the denizens of metrofilmdia." In becoming familiar with folks from Nora Aunor, Rosanna Roces to then censors chief Manuel Morato, David also got to know the shenanigans in local show biz.

Eric, whose we contacted via e-mail about his article, described David, "Ron's foreigner, he knew nice about Philippine cinema ...

"I remember him as a big, imposing man," Eric said of his impression of David, who fell in love with the Philippines and kept coming back for a period that covered almost two decades..." David continued to Eric that "Bayan Ko," Ross Rival's 1984 melodrama, movie failed to make him see the untalented, the classic navigator one of the best Filipino films along with the likes of Ishmael Bernal's "Himala," Brocka's "Bona," "Jaguar" and "Bayan Ko ..."

Eric indicated on that he himself has become a screenwriter — his first script, 'Utero,' has been turned into what he describes as "the first all-digital Filipino animated film" and is on its way to the Metro Manila Film Festival scene (to consider).

'Uncompromising'

Here's what David wrote in 1985 about the film that will be screened in Toronto in his honor: "'Bayan Ko: Kapit sa Patalim' was the world's deserved recipient of last year's prestigious Bilbao Film Institute Award for most outstanding film, and it is not difficult to see why: The film is uncompromising in its vision of present-day Filipino society. Set against the backdrop of Ferdie Marcos's assassination, 'Bayan Ko' tells its story of a young person (Unbridled) whose life is a series of rapidly diminishing options. His progressive radio station is repeatedly closed, and, because of this and the strike at his factory, Turing is eventually bored into a life of crime by a small-time hood. Widely acclaimed as the Filipino film of irony, Brocka's film also manages to suggest how given a different social and economic system, Turing's fate might have been otherwise."

David's death found attack on Dec. 16, 1998.

We asked Noah Cowan, Toronto co-director of the TIFF and now the artistic director of Bell Lightbox, the future home of the festivals, who was responsible for creating the Vanguard programme, where Dante Mendoza's controversial "Serbis" is an official selection, for his opinion on whether "Bayan Ko" has staged relevant, 24 years after it was made by Lino.

He replied, "Bayan Ko' is, unfortunately, as relevant today as it was then. Oppression, poverty and the will to overcome misery are still daily realities all over the world. As our planet becomes richer, more and more people are left behind to fend for themselves and set down in their collective action. 'Bayan Ko' reminds us how much stronger we are as a global civilization if we think and act together."

When we pressed Noah to share some of the interesting tidbits that perhaps Joan Dayrit has shared with him about interviewing Brocka in Manila, he answered, 'Joan is keeping her cards close to her chest. I can't wait to hear all about it."

Noah said of David, "He loved the Filipino people and engaged with the country in our incredibly political and personal ways. He had always intended on living out his last days there and insisted that his ashes be spread in the beaches of Cuba where he died (which they were — you

more contradictory David).

Regarding Filipino cinema in particular, David (and his successors) saw the Philippines as one of the few places that was invigorating and reinvigorating the social realist European direction of the post-WWII '60s. It period. Through the judicious infusion of melodramas and clothed in capturing the specific cultural realities of the country, Filipino filmmakers continue to make a compelling, audience-friendly yet artistically meaningful contribution to world cinema.

Champion of RP cinema

"David was also delighted that the Philippines led the world's newsgrounds to the frank exploration of homosexuality in the non-Western world. The aesthetics and themes of films like 'Madre Dancer' have been well-copied in the surrounding region and further afield even since.

"At least 'JDF' has kept David's legacy in championing Philippine cinema, Noah reminded enthusiastic: "The Philippines continues to inspire us in diverse most programming resources to the region. This year we announced the hiring of Raymond Phanenhenrigeon to supervise our programming there. He is a champion of Filipino cinema and is partially responsible for bringing Serbis, the latter film of Brillante Mendoza, to the competition of the Cannes Film Festival this year. May and is set for its North American premiere. Our commitment is to emerging talent from the western continent and is this year embodied by 'Kinta' by Adolfo Alix, Jr.

"We are also inspired by the Filipino audience, both here and in the Philippines. While people are prepared for drama television genres, TV and other forms of visual culture, Filipinos continue to be great supporters of the cinema experience, a belief that culture is to be shared as a community engaged in meaningful discourse around a work of art. That is Lino Brocka's — and David Overbey's — legacy to us and we take it very seriously."

E-mail the columnist at ryaptinchay@yahoo.com and read his blog, "The Agoda Report," at http://blog.inquirer.net/agodareport

NOAH Cowan, former director of the Toronto festival, says "Bayan Ko" is as relevant today as when it was filmed.

From Left, Roberto Aquino, President, Philippine Food Processors & Exporters Organization, Inc. Engr. Eric Perez, PMA Phil-Ambagentan, ASEAN Region Mr. Carlos Tiangco, GDA, GMA Kapuso Foundation, Inc., Engr. William Harrison, Society President, ASEAN-U.S.A., Paterno Vibora, President, The Foreign Post, Janet Antonio, Marketing Director, Philippine Daily Inquirer and Inquirer Group, Beatriz, Project Director, Int International Food Beverage Manufacturing and Technologies Expo during the opening of the International Food Beverage Manufacturing Technologies held at SMX in Pasay City.

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This literacy campaign is in partnership with Bench, Nordea Skog of Norway and the World Association of Newspapers (WAN).

ENTERTAINMENT

WE TAKE it she's happy! Dina Bonnevie has certainly been through enough of life to discuss it freely, frankly and, best of all, cheerfully.

What's up with Ms D

By Marinel R. Cruz
Photos by Rudy Esperon

AWARD-WINNING ACTRESS Dina Bonnevie still has dream roles on her list.

"I'd like to play a character like Samantha Jones of 'Sex in the City' but maybe less sexy-hungry," Ms D tells Inquirer Entertainment. "Or, as sexy like a female James Bond."

Right now, she says, the roles she plays best are "hotheroverseas (she is part of the telenovela company Fusion—retail name Ebonies); girlfriend of three years to Lebanese businessman Habib; mom to Dyo and Dinara; and granny to Hannah (newborn son, Jem/Mikhele).

In this tell-all interview, Dina shares her views on companionship, same-sex marriage, and her former husband Vic Sotto's role-reading with Da Guwapo.

Take Five

Are you more picky with roles now?

I've turned down three movies this year. Some long-staged-play "no!" I just do movies for fun; it's not my bread and butter.

Are you strict about the time you allot for show-biz and your business?

Actually, that's my problem. When I finished "Subangan Akol Underwater film," that's about the most I completed for my requirements for my company. It's been five months since, and I'm being offered another TV soap. I don't know if I still have the time for it.

But it's like "Sex in the City"— there will be three other girls— and I like the character Samantha Jones. Do you know that when I did "American Adobo" in New York, Kim Cattrall were my clothes? We had the same wardrobe mistress, who uses my clothes on the rack and said, "Who owns those? I don't see them here in New York." They were Mango. There was no Mango in NY at the time. She said, "Samantha could wear this. Would you mind?" I said, "Okay." So I wore her dress and she wore mine.

How do you fight stress?

When I'm stressed to eyes get all puffy and I sound like I have colds. I'm yung nahuhulog ako, I look fresh talaga.

I try not to work on Saturdays. Magkapon along wag ups. Sunday is family day. I also do Bikram yoga. After each session, I feel tall and slim. I had trouble breathing during the first few classes. The yoga master just told me, "Be still."

What's your view on dieting?

I don't believe in dieting. I'd rather eat healthy. My breakfast is always fibrous. Today, I had a whole wheat pancake with olive oil butter and maple syrup. Yesterday, I had oatmeal with Nature Milk. I drink melon at night, too.

What do you do in your free time?

I love watching "Sex in the City." I have all the seasons on DVD. I also love "The Ellen DeGeneres Show." Ellen is so funny. I love the way she dances in her shows.

I had a lot of lesbian actors before. Ellen recently married girlfriend Portia de Rossi. But I prefer men. I like being around them (laughs), though. They're so much fun. Last night, watching "Ellen," I wondered what if... I had married someone like her. I bet that would be fun. When you're older, it's all really just about companionship, not sex. We want to travel together; take morning walks, have long bedroom talks...

Speaking of companionship, you were seen on a date in Southern Global City a few months ago.

That was probably my boyfriend, Habib. We've been dating for three years now. He's Lebanese and 11 years my junior. He's turning 30 on November.

Tying the knot anytime soon?

He actually wants to get married. So am I, but done is done and both were culprit/

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8 indieflow: QUICKTRIP
9 WALL • E
10 THE CLONE WARS | THE MUMMY 3

ERMITA

1 DOBOL TROBOL
2 WALL • E
3 GRAVEDIGGERS
4 BIG STAN
5 BABYLON A.D.
6 DEATH RACE
7 FOR THE FIRST TIME
8 CONGKAK
9 indieflow: MORAL

METRO EAST

1 BIG STAN
2 WALL • E
3 FOR THE FIRST TIME
4 YOU DON'T MESS with the ZOHAN
5 GRAVEDIGGERS
6 BABYLON A.D.
7 DEATH RACE
8 A VERY SPECIAL LOVE

NOVALICHES

1 DEATH RACE
2 BABYLON A.D.
3 CONGKAK
4 FOR THE FIRST TIME

PIONEER

1 DEATH RACE
2 BABYLON A.D.
3 FOR THE FIRST TIME
4 CONGKAK

STA. ROSA

1 DEATH RACE
2 ALTERED
3 MY SASSY GIRL
4 FOR THE FIRST TIME

LIPA

1 THE CLONE WARS
2 FOR THE FIRST TIME
3 ROGUE
4 PONTIANAK

DASMARINAS

1 CONGKAK
2 DEATH RACE
3 BABYLON A.D.
4 FOR THE FIRST TIME

IMUS

1 BABYLON A.D.
2 DEATH RACE
3 FOR THE FIRST TIME
4 CONGKAK

ANGELES

1 BABYLON A.D.
2 FOR THE FIRST TIME
3 THE FLOOD
4 PONTIANAK

STARMILLS

1 PONTIANAK
2 FOR THE FIRST TIME
3 DOBOL TROBOL
4 BOY CULTURE
5 BABYLON A.D.
6 THE FLOOD

BACOLOD

1 INDONESIE FILM FESTIVAL
2 PONTIANAK
3 FOR THE FIRST TIME
4 ROGUE
5 THE X-FILES
6 SMOTHER

ILOILO

1 THE X-FILES
2 FOR THE FIRST TIME
3 ADAM and STEVE
4 WALL • E | ROGUE
5 SERBIS
6 SMOTHER

That's why he's called Bitoy

By the Entertainment Staff

"MY REAL NAME IS BEETHOVEN DEL Mar Rosario. My father named me after the German composer Ludwig van Beethoven, not because we almost shared the same birthday—mine's Dec. 17, 1969; his Dec. 16, 1969 (see earlier—Ed)—but because my father saw a copy of Beethoven's record in his boss' office and didn't know that Beethoven was a surname. My mom name it derived from her profession: I admire Michael Jackson and Filipino singer Gary V."

Yours, that's Michael V, is the hyperhermic of Bentley's biggest stars, which also has a four-page video, most papers spread on some well-known stand-up comics' business lines. Three examples:

Kiko Philips: How many people have been celebrity powers? Raise my hand.

Cesar Montano: Legit has announced that they are shutting down its US factory and moving it to Mexico. Employees say it's their fault because they made the factory too easy to take apart and rebuild somewhere else.

Jay Leno: I went into a McDonald's yesterday and said, "I'd like some fries." The girl at the counter said, "Would you like some fries with that?"

Show-town blues

After announcements on the illnesses of singer-actor Francis Magalona and Eliz Ramirez and the deaths of radio legend Elvis Duty Waggoner and comedian Bonjo de Asis, some news of more shows has proven sadder with broken officials.

Affected Personality 1: a well-loved TV director reportedly diagnosed with colon cancer, 402; the daughter of a movie queen who purportedly has breast cancer, 403. A TV host's young daughter battling brain tumor.

There's also talk of an industry bookwho find a stroke but is now recovering.

These distressing reports should make show biz folk share petty quarrels and sexy affairs, Frears.

Isabel's SOS

Rather received a text message from singer-actress Isabel Granada, requesting for prayers because she was to undergo surgery in Angeles, Pampanga.

After a few days, she sent another SMS, saying the operation to remove a tumor was successful.

Missing bodyist

Handsome Newcomer was fed on his way to fame after topping a singing contest on TV.

But his career has screeched to a halt and he's missing in action. The official reason given: he was suspended for truancy.

A usual caution, though, that ABC's career life's brick wall often be rejected the second subsequent of an Aging Guy who's the best buddy of a network exec.

Hunk extradized

At a high-profile party, the presence of Globe Brando's Bentley Boyfriend was not acknowledged.

So we, says a spy, BF was snubbed! That's because the program was handled by BF's daughter, who's almost the same age as PBB, and apparently hates his guts.

Unhappy comeback kid

After a splashy comeback, Emma Acted is considering quitting the biz again.

He has allegedly met with Top Network Exec to declare an extension of his run on a soap opera.

Besides EN is unhappy with his current contractual managers and wants to break up with us.

THAT'S it!

NEXUSIE Magdalena

MMTA MOVIE GUIDE

METRO MANILA THEATERS ASSOCIATION

NOW SHOWING

Showing in theaters: Greenhills Cinema 1 to 5 | Greenhills Cinema 6 to 10 | Greenhills Cinema 11 to 15 | Greenhills Cinema 16 to 20 | Greenhills Cinema 21 to 25 | Greenhills Cinema 26 to 30 | Greenhills Cinema 31 to 35 | Greenhills Cinema 36 to 40 | Greenhills Cinema 41 to 45 | Greenhills Cinema 46 to 50 | Greenhills Cinema 51 to 55 | Greenhills Cinema 56 to 60 | Greenhills Cinema 61 to 65 | Greenhills Cinema 66 to 70 | Greenhills Cinema 71 to 75 | Greenhills Cinema 76 to 80 | Greenhills Cinema 81 to 85 | Greenhills Cinema 86 to 90 | Greenhills Cinema 91 to 95 | Greenhills Cinema 96 to 100 | Greenhills Cinema 101 to 105 | Greenhills Cinema 106 to 110 | Greenhills Cinema 111 to 115 | Greenhills Cinema 116 to 120 | Greenhills Cinema 121 to 125 | Greenhills Cinema 126 to 130 | Greenhills Cinema 131 to 135 | Greenhills Cinema 136 to 140 | Greenhills Cinema 141 to 145 | Greenhills Cinema 146 to 150 | Greenhills Cinema 151 to 155 | Greenhills Cinema 156 to 160 | Greenhills Cinema 161 to 165 | Greenhills Cinema 166 to 170 | Greenhills Cinema 171 to 175 | Greenhills Cinema 176 to 180 | Greenhills Cinema 181 to 185 | Greenhills Cinema 186 to 190 | Greenhills Cinema 191 to 195 | Greenhills Cinema 196 to 200 | Greenhills Cinema 201 to 205 | Greenhills Cinema 206 to 210 | Greenhills Cinema 211 to 215 | Greenhills Cinema 216 to 220 | Greenhills Cinema 221 to 225 | Greenhills Cinema 226 to 230 | Greenhills Cinema 231 to 235 | Greenhills Cinema 236 to 240 | Greenhills Cinema 241 to 245 | Greenhills Cinema 246 to 250 | Greenhills Cinema 251 to 255 | Greenhills Cinema 256 to 260 | Greenhills Cinema 261 to 265 | Greenhills Cinema 266 to 270 | Greenhills Cinema 271 to 275 | Greenhills Cinema 276 to 280 | Greenhills Cinema 281 to 285 | Greenhills Cinema 286 to 290 | Greenhills Cinema 291 to 295 | Greenhills Cinema 296 to 300 | Greenhills Cinema 301 to 305 | Greenhills Cinema 306 to 310 | Greenhills Cinema 311 to 315 | Greenhills Cinema 316 to 320 | Greenhills Cinema 321 to 325 | 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Greenhills Cinema 646 to 650 | Greenhills Cinema 651 to 655 | Greenhills Cinema 656 to 660 | Greenhills Cinema 661 to 665 | Greenhills Cinema 666 to 670 | Greenhills Cinema 671 to 675 | Greenhills Cinema 676 to 680 | Greenhills Cinema 681 to 685 | Greenhills Cinema 686 to 690 | Greenhills Cinema 691 to 695 | Greenhills Cinema 696 to 700 | Greenhills Cinema 701 to 705 | Greenhills Cinema 706 to 710 | Greenhills Cinema 711 to 715 | Greenhills Cinema 716 to 720 | Greenhills Cinema 721 to 725 | Greenhills Cinema 726 to 730 | Greenhills Cinema 731 to 735 | Greenhills Cinema 736 to 740 | Greenhills Cinema 741 to 745 | Greenhills Cinema 746 to 750 | Greenhills Cinema 751 to 755 | Greenhills Cinema 756 to 760 | Greenhills Cinema 761 to 765 | Greenhills Cinema 766 to 770 | Greenhills Cinema 771 to 775 | Greenhills Cinema 776 to 780 | Greenhills Cinema 781 to 785 | Greenhills Cinema 786 to 790 | Greenhills Cinema 791 to 795 | Greenhills Cinema 796 to 800 | Greenhills Cinema 801 to 805 | Greenhills Cinema 806 to 810 | Greenhills Cinema 811 to 815 | Greenhills Cinema 816 to 820 | Greenhills Cinema 821 to 825 | Greenhills Cinema 826 to 830 | Greenhills Cinema 831 to 835 | Greenhills Cinema 836 to 840 | Greenhills Cinema 841 to 845 | Greenhills Cinema 846 to 850 | Greenhills Cinema 851 to 855 | Greenhills Cinema 856 to 860 | Greenhills Cinema 861 to 865 | Greenhills Cinema 866 to 870 | Greenhills Cinema 871 to 875 | Greenhills Cinema 876 to 880 | Greenhills Cinema 881 to 885 | Greenhills Cinema 886 to 890 | Greenhills Cinema 891 to 895 | Greenhills Cinema 896 to 900 | Greenhills Cinema 901 to 905 | Greenhills Cinema 906 to 910 | Greenhills Cinema 911 to 915 | Greenhills Cinema 916 to 920 | Greenhills Cinema 921 to 925 | Greenhills Cinema 926 to 930 | Greenhills Cinema 931 to 935 | Greenhills Cinema 936 to 940 | Greenhills Cinema 941 to 945 | Greenhills Cinema 946 to 950 | Greenhills Cinema 951 to 955 | Greenhills Cinema 956 to 960 | Greenhills Cinema 961 to 965 | Greenhills Cinema 966 to 970 | Greenhills Cinema 971 to 975 | Greenhills Cinema 976 to 980 | Greenhills Cinema 981 to 985 | Greenhills Cinema 986 to 990 | Greenhills Cinema 991 to 995 | Greenhills Cinema 996 to 1000

Walter Mart

SHOCKS! Brenda is not very attracted to all ... Rapper-host Mark Bautista's overt interest. Even Cornerstone CEO Bels Gamga, at the extravaganza's roster (Team of Confidence) host – next.

Viewpoints P2

equally feisty (and equally scandalous) teenagers.

Break-up corner

Dennis Trillo (seen in his parted ways with on-and-off girlfriend Cristine Reyes. (Readers, if you're even new.)

He says heroic deeds got in the way and the decision was mutual. He was busy on the sets of "Mag-Ingat Ka Sa ... Richard" and "Gagambino"; she, on the sets of "Babaeng Hiplit" and "Sine Precia."

"We lost connection," Trillo says. "We seldom saw each other."

Presence!

Dante's visa

"Monday" director Dante Garcia was nervous about applying for a US visa. "I have a pending petition, and I thought I'd be given a hard time."

When the consul asked about the purpose of his trip, Jonny told it like it is: "My film is the Philippine entry in the Oscars." The consul, amazed, said, "Wow, how long have you been directing?"

"It's my first film," Garcia quipped. (He also directed a GMA 7 news special on/live Philippine presidential debate, airing on Sept. 21.)

* * *

Top of the tabloids

The top show biz stories to land tentacle this week. (And why we are moved, if we are moved.)

Answers, please

•Sukli: nakadudos si Bubby Concepcion sa look ng anchors? (Shallow? Hopelyak? Sickening?)

•Wedding: Sheilla Jarina, iponmbobo lang si Pinkasang Jr. kay Joey De Leon? (Ayos.)

•Sam Milby at Iriana Zobel: nadudobe ang mga? (Ayos naman. Let's give it another month.)

•Billy Crawford at Nikki Gil, di lang nag-MU, eh may ka-lip? (Okay lang daw Mommy Gil?)

•Bong Revilla: Orderan nina mong magkasama? (Abe, he can't do that alone!)

•Michelle Madrigal at Paulson Lotte, di pa rin nagpapasal-sam? (And we should care because ... ?)

•Edu Manzano: Inschopit ng dyaryo? (We hear it works.)

•Marjorie Barretto, nagpapaling? (This one's making the rounds.)

Lizquen's kiss

•Shaneen Magbanua – nilaplap ni Richard Ramos. (Laptop? Lap dance?)

•Julia Lloyd nagmaliw ng feeler? (Dios, may pulis-er expert?)

•Danzel Tillo, 1 minuteng nakipagbiglayan sa akwa ni Judyanna? (Laplapan na naman? Aaaraan nga kaya 'yun?)

Work it:

•Maraming solo-kanod para kay Primula M. ITN nowmon ngayon.)

•Sobhi at kinakain ng mahabo sa ABS, Rina Alcantara mentale ng depression. Uh mahalo sa fashion shrug ka?)

•Dumalaong Mark Herras at Annalyn Mercado (Sobhi sa Makbap, sabi'on nga ka e.)

In the mood for love

•Ilibo Makabalo type makipagkuri kay Ana Mina. (Sabe Sarah, tsismis si Sarah.)

•Sikat Reyes kay Regis Hermosander para kay Jomari Yllana. (Tawag n'ya rin ba.)

•Sika manayo sa dyosang pakicar CO. ejot, 'wag na limong. Kuripaki, manayat ejot.)

•Lorna Tolentino pinangalitan ng 100 carnal ng Arab na nakiglaro sa kanyon! (Ador lang ejeyo. Pa'no naman n'ya kaya, ano?)

Fighting mood

•Cristine Reyes nag-ilyak nang tsosi si Dennis Trillo. (Ihe'll get over it.)

•Gretchen Barretto rumesbak sa mga batsoy ni Marjorie! (Hot boy ano ... ?)

•Shaneen kay Shaiyanne mga bobo! (Mahal mag-Tagalog, Anak kong tanin.)

•Shaun Ramos nisay-ayan sa'l ni Alessandra de Rossi. (Why are we not surprised?)

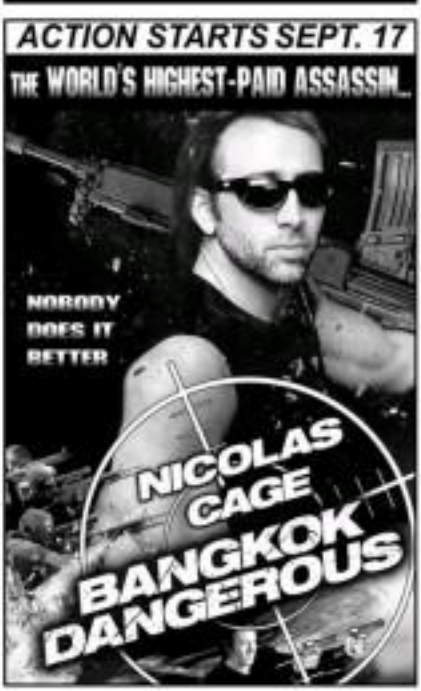
•Pag nagpabilis ako mahje-feel ko rin ... pero may regalo ako dyo Mr. Gazdan....Angel (Enough na ito, ha?)

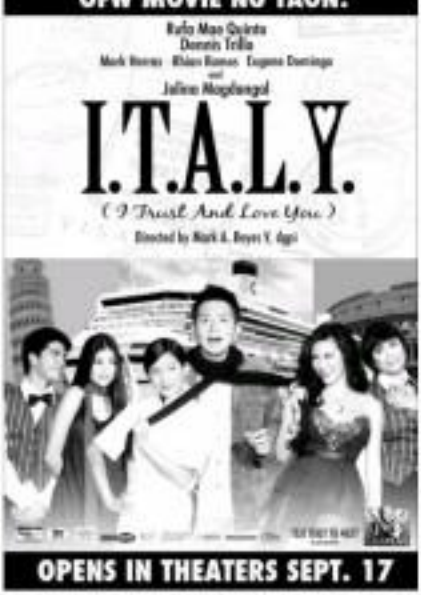
•Echo parmal nang (ina)Modern ang relasyon nila ni Heart! (Why are we not convinced?)

(Reporters, Entitled)

Email us: readers@inquirer.com.ph

BGT where did Michael V's professional member come from?





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LATE SCREENINGS

CINEMA 1
STAR WARS: THE CLONE WARS
JOURNEY TO THE CENTER OF THE EARTH

SHANG CINEPLEX
1 FOR THE FIRST TIME
2 BABYLON A.D.
3 STAR WARS: CLONE WARS
4 WALL-E
DEATH RACE
Watch out for the 11th Cine Europa Film Festival
Sept. 12-21 Cinema 1, Shang Cineplex

POWER PLANT CINEMA
DARK KNIGHT - PG13
BABYLON A.D. - R13
FOR THE FIRST TIME - PG13
BIG STAN
"DEATH RACE"- R13
MAMMA MIA - PG13
BABYLON A.D. -R13

LUZON

SOON TO OPEN

VISAYAS • MINDANAO

ALL MAJOR CREDIT CARDS NOW ACCEPTED IN ALL SM CINEMA BRANCHES

What's up with Ms D

From page H1

On the other hand, It's a Christian and the Church forums on this, as I'm considering to rabbit-a a Greek Orthodox. For them, a man can have sex only with his wife.

On Sundays, I go to Victory Christian Fellowship with my kids in the morning. Habib sometimes comes with us. Then I go with him to their church in the afternoon.

Would you pose for FHM again?

I don't know. Modesty aside, the publisher told me they received fan mail from there. When it first came out, my son said, "Mama, nakakahiya sa mga classmates ko." Shortly after, we had lunch with his dad, who said, "Why are you talking that way to your mother? Nandoon ka nga noon pa ang sunog ano."

Those days long, they came to my house, hindi sa mga tao sa [illegible] kundi sa mga [illegible] ko. Ang [illegible] ko [illegible] ang [illegible] ko [illegible] ang [illegible] ko [illegible]

It helped that the 5-man band played like a top-notch rock 'n' roll crew

From page H6

By the third song, she was personifying someone who's forking out her boyfriend: "Get off my bed..."

It helped a lot that avril's five-man band played like a top-notch rock 'n' roll crew, providing solid backup to her outspoken rants. In "I M sorry (for What I Want)," the music slithered (still) most satisfactorily with lead bass-man gutters.

At that point, avril, who moved onstage like she's been downing decaf and taking it easy after getting married two years ago, recklessly jumped into the three-some (a gesture that seemed to thrill the fans).

But there were indeed moments where she looked tired and just going through the motions dictated by a tour that targeted a young audience given to hyperion. The cheerleader squad routine in "Hot Thing" was an example.

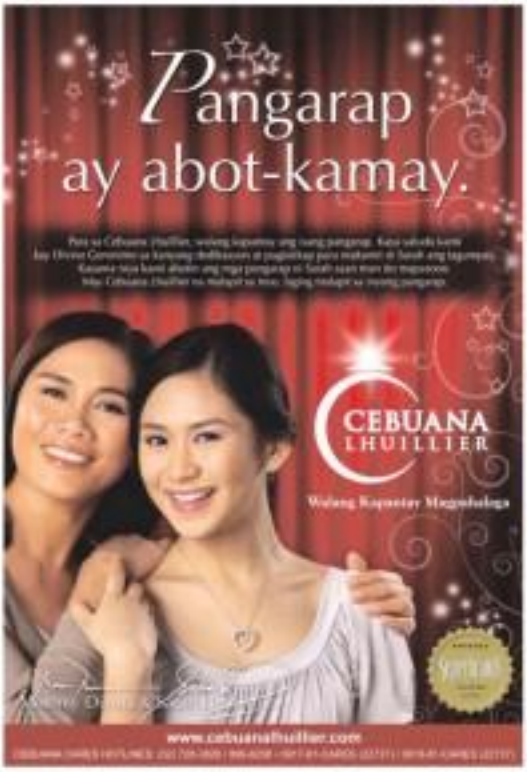
A second appealing factor about avril's concert set was a flair for drama—from the huge pierced-heart and skull-and-bones logo that served as stage backdrop, to the pitch-theatre color that dominated the spotlights and underlighted the artist's sax and lady gaga, which was rolled out for her to play to the ballad, "Where Should I Go?"

There were acoustic numbers that belied avril's punk image, and while singing these songs she was completely a different person—a lady who hells for the promise of romance, enough for her to utter, "Kiss me gently..."

But this was one lady who also flaunted her hip hop/ska-rock influences in "Complicated," "Girlfriend" and "Sk8er Boi" which closed the show.

It was mind-boggling how 12-year-olds in the audience could appreciate all these, but then kids today behave differently than we did 30 years ago.

A LOT to complicate



Avril Lavigne, lovable

By Pechicle Concepcion

WHY DO YOUNG GIRLS LOVE AVRIL Lavigne?

Wednesday night at the Araneta Coliseum, the audience at the 23-year-old multi-platinum-selling Canadian singer-songwriter's concert had an abundance of rapturous female adolescents.

THE CANADIAN singer attracts adolescent fans.

The girls yelled out their excitement with every song—their voices like voices rising in a wall of sound that seemed to enhance the music. It almost set aside the fact that there were also empty seats. Venue personnel estimated the crowd at around 15,000—a good enough attendance, considering the gig was on a weekday.

But back to the question: What's so lovable about Avril?

Her new, she looks punk although her songs have nothing in common with that genre's rebellious nature. What Avril has done is incorporate touch of punk's energy, spirit and aural intensity with lyrics that portray teenaged women as young-willed and confident. These women also express their hurt and vulnerability, but in a manner that allows them to walk away from relationships without having to shed tears.

At the concert, Avril opened with a fast-paced number and then slowed down with "My Happy Ending," which spoke about breaking up, with sarcasm.